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THE

ANSAIREEH OR NUSAIRIS OF SYRIA

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THE

ASIAN MYSTERY

ILLUSTRATED IN THE HISTORY, RELIGION, AND PRESENT STATE OF THE

ANSAIREEH OR NUSAIRIS OF SYRIA

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BY

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LONDON

LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS

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PREFACE.

In this book I have attempted for the sect of the Ansaireeh what De Sacy has already effected for that of the Druses. My qualifications for the task have been—

First: Connexion with the Ansaireeh for many years, as the only European who has lived among them in their mountains, where alone they are unmixed with other tribes.

Secondly: Acquaintance with Ansairee belief and customs, acquired orally from Christian servants and others brought up in Ansairee districts; and, especially, from an Ansairee lad, who has had many opportunities of gaining information.

Thirdly: Possession of an Ansairee liturgical book, called the "Manual of Sheikhs," in which all the main points of the Ansairee system, theological and ceremonial, are developed.

I have, moreover, consulted such Arab and other historians and authors as promised to throw any light on the Ansaireeh, and all published Ansairee documents that I could hear of. I could have wished for greater opportunities of examining original Ansairee writings. Indeed, I might have been inclined to delay compiling the present work, in the expectation of rendering it some day more complete, had not the state of my health made it uncertain whether I should enjoy such opportunity. As it is, I trust that it will serve as a stepping-stone to those who may follow in the same road.

I have thus employed the leisure hours arising from illness, in the hope that my labours might tend to the furtherance of missionary work among a neglected people. The letting in of light on the hidden things of darkness is always favourable, with God's blessing, to the progress of Christianity in the world.

S. L.

Cairo, 1860.

Note.—It is principally in Germany and France that Ansairee documents have been published.

NIEBUHR (Travels, vol. ii. p. 357, &c.) gives an account of an Ansairee book which had come into his possession.

DE SACY (Exposition of Druse Religion, vol. ii. p. 580, note) speaks of this book as having been lent to him by Niebuhr, and translated by him.

Both Niebuhr and De Sacy speak of a Druse book against the Ansaireeh, from which De Sacy gives many extracts.

BURCKHARDT (Travels, p. 151) speaks of an Ansairee book which had come into the hands of M. Rousseau, "who has had it translated into French, and means to publish it;" and M. Rousseau himself (Annales des Voyages, cahier xlii.) has spoken of the Ansaireeh.

In the Yearly Report of the German Oriental Society for 1845-6, mention is made of an Ansairee Catechism, which had been sent, with a French translation, to the King of Prussia. A translation of copious extracts from this document is given by Dr. WOLFF, in vol. iii. p. 302, &c., of the Journal of the same Society.

But the most complete information hitherto given with respect to the Ansaireeh is to be found in the papers of M. CATAFAGO, in the Journals of the French, Asiatic, and German Oriental Societies.

In the Journal Asiatique, Feb. 1848, he has given an account of a book of Ansairee Festivals and Prayers; and also three Masses from the same in the Journal of the German Oriental Society, vol. ii. p. 388.

In the Journal Asiatique, July, 1848, he has given the heads of the contents of an Ansairee book, which I conclude to be the one in my possession, and which, in that case, must have been once lent to him. The book itself was purchased by me from a Christian merchant in Ladikeeh for the sum of £10, having come into his hands during the troublesome times of Ibrahim Pasha, when the Ansaireeh were driven from their homes

Finally, in the Révue d'Orient for June, 1856, there is a short paper on the Ansaireeh by M. VICTOR LANGLOIS. He says that his account is taken from a MS. in the library of the Mufti of Tarsus, and it is in the main correct.

The Rev. SAMUEL LYDE *died at Alexandria, on the* 1*st of April,* 1860, *shortly after he had finished the work which is now published by relatives to whom he was very dear. His intention was to enlarge on some points, after reference to authorities to which he had not access in the East; but this he did not live to accomplish. His Mission is taken up by others; and his brother, whose address can be obtained through the Publishers, will be happy to give information to any one interested in it.*

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THE ASIAN MYSTERY.

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY AND DESCRIPTION OF THE ANSAIREE COUNTRY.

If the reader will take any map of Syria which has some pretensions to accuracy, and will look at the sea-coast, he will find in the parallel of latitude 35° 30′ the town of Ladikeeh, the Laodicea of Seleucus Nicator, now known through the tobacco exported from it; which tobacco is grown in the neighbouring mountains.

These mountains, which are the special abode of the Ansaireeh*, he will find to the east of Ladikeeh, stretching from north to south, and called by names as various as the different maps which he may consult.

The Ansairee mountains are separated on the south from the Lebanon range, by the entrance into Hamath, a valley through which run the roads from Tripoli to Hamah, and from Tartoos to Hums, and also flows the ancient Eleutherus, the Nahr-il-Chebeer of to-day. To the north they are separated from the mountains, of which Mount Cassius forms the conspicuous western termination,

* By Arab writers they are called An-Nusaireeyah. I have written Ansaireeh as the nearest English imitation of the pronunciation of the people themselves, when they speak of themselves by that name. They usually style themselves Fellaheen, that is, peasantry.

by a pass and valley, over and through which runs the road from Ladikeeh to Aleppo.

But though these mountains are so almost exclusively inhabited by the Ansaireeh as to be called by their name, and in them is found the nucleus of the Ansairee nation, and though in them and the neighbouring plains alone are they governed by their own chiefs, and hold their lands directly from government, yet the Ansairee population of Syria is by no means confined to them.

They are the chief cultivators of the plain, which stretches on the west of the mountains, from Wady Kandeel, about four hours, or twelve miles, to the north of Ladikeeh (where the ground begins to swell into the range of Cassius), to the district of Safeetah and the Nahr-il-Chebeer, twenty-two hours, or sixty-six miles to the south. On the east the narrow strip of ground between the mountains and the Orontes, stretching to the south from Djisr-ish-Shogher on the Aleppo road to the distance of about thirty miles, belongs to them, and they possess villages in the wide plain which stretches east to Hums and Hamah, in which last is a miserable quarter inhabited by them.

To the south of the Eleutherus or Nahr-il-Chebeer, considerable numbers are to be found in the district of Kulaat-il-Husn, and in the more southerly district of Akkar.

To the north of Wady Kandeel they form part of the peasantry of the range of mountains which are bounded on the west by Mount Cassius, and by the Orontes on the east and north. Along the valley of the Orontes, in the plains of Antioch, they are to be found in great numbers, from Suadeiah, on the sea-coast, near the ancient Seleucia, fifteen miles to the west of Antioch, to the Djisr il-Hhadeed, twelve miles to the east, where the road from Antioch to Aleppo crosses the Orontes. Three hours, or nine miles further on, on the east of the Orontes, and on the right hand of the road to Aleppo, is to be seen the

castle of Harim. In the mountains which stretch from it towards the south is found a group of Ansairee villages, as also in the district of Il Roodj, hard by to the east.

In Antioch itself they form a large element of the population, and are to be found along the sea-coast from it to Scanderoon, especially in the neighbourhood of Arsoos, the Rhosus of Ptolemy.*

Leaving Syria for a moment, and crossing the ancient bay of Issus, they abound in the districts of Adana and Tarsoos, the ancient Tarsus. In Syria, far away to the south, in the lower extremity of the Wady-il-Taym, near Banias, the ancient Cæsarea Philippi, are the three Ansaireeh villages of Anfeet, Zaoorah, and El Ghudjr.†

To conclude: in that east country which was the cradle of their religion, remnants of them still exist. An Ansairee sheikh from Bagdad, who spent two days in my house in the Ansairee mountains, assured me that there were some five hundred Ansaireehs in Bagdad, and declared that there was a town in Persia exclusively inhabited by them.

Before proceeding to give the estimated number of this people, I will attempt to give some idea of the geography, physical and otherwise, of the Ansairee mountains and the country adjacent.

Mount Cassius rises to the north of Ladikeeh and near the mouth of the Orontes, in a magnificent cone of some

* The parts about Rhosus are described by Carl Ritter, Erdkunde, Theil xvii. Kap. 27.

† I was once prevented from visiting these villages when on my way to them, I will, therefore, give here the information I have been able to procure from my friend, Rev. J. E. Ford, American missionary at Sidon, being obtained by him from various sources. Anfeet, population 200 souls, mostly Kumreeh; Zaoorah, 150 souls, mostly Kumreeh; El-Ghudjr, 250 souls, mostly Shemseeh. The villages are within a half an hour of Banias, W. and N.W. It is to be doubted, adds Mr. Ford, whether their distinctions as Shemseeh and Kumreeh are correctly ascertained by the people who go among them. I myself was once informed that they were all Shemseeh, and in the latest maps the positions of the villages is given as south of Banias.

5,000 or 5,700 feet in height. It is joined to the Ansairee mountains by a far lower range, over which passes the road from Ladikeeh to Antioch, past the Mussulman village of Oordee, situated near half way. The distance is about twelve hours from Ladikeeh to Oordee, and ten more from Oordee to Antioch, in all about twenty-two hours or sixty-six miles. From Ladikeeh to the mouth of the Orontes is reckoned at twenty-hours, or sixty miles, and from Antioch to Scanderoon (or Alexandretta), eleven hours, or thirty-three miles.

The Ansairee mountains commence, as I have said, to the south of the road from Ladikeeh to Aleppo, which, after crossing a pass in the mountains near Bahluleeh, an Ansairee village, about six hours distant, north-east of Ladikeeh, continues for eleven hours through a winding valley, past the Turcoman village of Bedawa, to Djisr-ish-Shogher, a large Mussulman village, where it crosses the Orontes, and so on a journey of two days more, or sixteen hours, to Aleppo. The distance from Ladikeeh to Aleppo is thus about thirty-three hours, or ninety-nine miles.

But before proceeding with the Ansairee mountains, I will return for a little towards Mount Cassius, as now may be the best time to say something of the political divisions of the country, so as to fix them in the mind by means of the natural objects included in them, and the reverse.

The province of Ladikeeh includes not only the greater part of the western slope of the Ansaireeh mountains, but also of the Mount Cassius range. From Wady Kandeel, along the sea-coast, and on towards Oordee, is the district of Boodjak. The chief inhabitants, as in the time of Ibn-Batoutah, the Moghrebbin traveller, some 500 years ago, are Turcomans. I once spent an evening with Hafiz Aga, the governor of the district, who is nephew of the chief man of Oordee. He was in considerable fear of the wild Ansaireeh of the south, and received me very graciously,

giving me credit for great influence among them, as I was residing in one of the most powerful districts.

The district of the Baier, also chiefly Mussulman, lies to the north-east of the Boodjak, and is but of small extent. To the east, and on the north side of the road from Ladikeeh to Djisr-ish-Shogher and Aleppo, is the district of Djebel-il-Akrâd, chiefly inhabited by a colony of Kurds. I once skirted these mountains to the south, on my way to the small town or village of Shogher, and I had before passed over part of them, and then round their base to Antioch, on my journey thither from the same place. The present governor is called Mohammed Aga Yumisu.*

Facing these mountains to the south are the mountains of the Ansaireeh, to which we now come. Anciently styled Mons Bargylus, they are called by the Arab geographers Ibn-Haukal † and Abulfeda Djebel Lukkâm, and in the southern part, where dwelt the Syrian Assassins, Djebel Summâk and Djebel-il-Aamileh. They are considerably lower than the Lebanon range, their height being from 3000 to 4000 feet. On the west they sweep in circles round the large plains of Ladikeeh and Tartoos, throwing out spurs, which at the castle of Merkab reach the sea, and skirt it for some distance.‡ On the east they run in a straight line overlooking the Orontes, to the valley of which they descend, to the eye, almost precipitously, though there is room for deep valleys, gorges, and extensive woods, and several villages. The people on this side are relations of those who respectively adjoin them

* The districts of Mount Cassius, such as Kusair, Urdeh, Djebel Akrâd, &c., are described in the Erdkunde of Carl Ritter, Theil xvii. Kap. 16.

† Ibn-Haukal, (Wonnely, London, 1808,) p. 38.

‡ Kenrick (Phœnicia, p. 4), misled by the words of some traveller, says: "Between Ladikeeh and Djebileh the country is mountainous; but from Djebileh extends the plain bounded by the Ansarian or Nasairieh mountains." The plain commences beyond Ladikeeh to the north, and sweeps round Djebileh to the east as far as Castle Merkab.

on the other, of whom, as I shall show hereafter, many crossed the mountains from the east. Burckhardt gives the names of villages on the east of the mountains, and I repeat the names of some as verified by myself. Beginning from the north is Merdadj, the village of Mohammed ibn-Djaafar, chief man of the eastern Amamareh, of whom I saw the son, who was studying under a sheikh with his relations at Diryoos. In the plain is the village of Khandok, belonging to Mohammed Ali Khadro, who lives at Ain Nab, farther to the south. He alone of the Ansaireeh remained unsubdued by Ibrahim Pasha, taking refuge in his valleys and woods, while on the east his country is defended by the marshes of the Orontes, which are only passable in certain places by boats, through lanes of deep water amid the sedge. He seems now to be the man of chief influence on that side of the mountains, and is by all accounts a wild fellow. I have never yet fulfilled an intention of visiting him, though once when the mountains were in a stir about a religious discussion which I had had with the chief sheikh, I was told that he asked permission of the people of the district in which I lived, on the other side of the mountains, to come with twenty-five men to make an end of the mission.

Still farther to the south is Ain-il-Keroom, inhabited by relations of the wild Narvasireh of the western side. Burckhardt speaks of them as rebels in his time.

On the west side of the mountains, at the extreme north, live the Diryoos people, of which the chief man, Mohammed Badoor, living in the village of Diryoos, has influence over all the Ansairee peasantry in the Cassius range, and about Antioch, as they are of the same sect with himself; the Ansaireeh being divided, as I shall afterwards show, into two principal sects, the Shemseeh, called also the Shemaleeh or Northerners, as living mostly to the north, and the Kumreeh, who living to the south give the Shemseeh the above name. Two hours westerly is Il Kushbee, an old tower, where lives Ali Aga Hassan,

a relation of Ahmed Badoor, who has turned Mussulman. I once spent a night with him, having reached him in about three hours from Il Hhuffeh, a village of the Sahyoon district. I was on my way to him from Bahlulech, and reached Shereefah, a border village of the Bahlulech district, with fine plantations running down to the gorge leading to Djisr-ish-Shogher. After passing it a little way, and arriving at a village Ard-il-Hamra, near Bahenna, I was stopped by the people of the latter village, and taken off to Sahyoon, from whence when released I prosecuted my journey to Il Kushbee. From Il Kushbee, I paid a visit to the tomb of the Nebbee Yūnis, or Jonah, riding about two or three hours in an easterly or north-easterly direction. It seemed the highest point in all this part of the mountain, and near it more south is the mountain of the Nebbee Matta, which seemed to Burckhardt, looking at it from the east, to be the highest point of the Ansairee range. In this part of the mountains are many towers, commanding the pass from Ladikeeh to Aleppo.

The people of Diryoos, in the winter and spring, live in houses on the edge of the Orontes marshes, and with the other Ansaireeh of the eastern side of the mountains, descend into the valley of the Ghâb, cross the Orontes, and carry off the flocks of the Turcomans, who, as Burckhardt says, have in consequence not too good an opinion of them. The Diryoos people are a wild and lawless set, who, under their present chief man, have obtained an independence from their former governors of Beyt Shilf.

From Diryoos, I started in a south-west direction for Ain-il-Teeneh, a village situate under a spur of the mountains, which rises conspicuously on the verge of the plain east of Ladikeeh, in a line crowned by the tomb of the Nebbee Rubeel, or Reuben.* The road lay across a deep valley,

* This may not be the patriarch Reuben, for Niebuhr speaks of a certain Rubeel, son of Saleh, an Arabian prophet.

and over high table-land, the distance being between one or two hours' ride. From hence I took about the same time to get to Djindjaneh, after passing a very deep valley and skirting a mountain running from the eastern ridge over the table-land towards the west. Djindjaneh is prettily situated between two mountains, and is the residence of Ali Hhabeeb, an old man, Mekuddam, or chief of that section of the Amamarąh, who live in the part I had passed through from Diryoos. They extend still farther to the south in the highest part of the mountains, behind the districts of the Muhailby and Kelbeeh, and also to the east of the mountains as before said. The Mekuddam of the southern section is Mohammed Saeed. They form a considerable body, and bear a good character, being earnest in matters of religion, and averse to robbery, presenting thus a great contrast to their neighbours. They are as the Diryoos people of the Shemseeh sect, but were originally of the Kumreeh, a fact which I shall have to notice again.

From Djindjaneh it took me less than an hour to arrive at Muzairiah, which is a village giving its name to the district, which includes not only the part of the mountains of which we have spoken, but also part of the plain. In this village is a colony of Greeks, that is Arabs of the Greek Church, who some 150 years ago emigrated here from the Hauran. There are few Christian villages in these mountains. Among them are Aramo, an Armenian village, near the residence of Ali Aga Hassan, and Dar Sofra, a Maronite village to the south of Castle Merkab.

Still going south from Muzairiah, one soon reaches the Muhailby district, of which the inhabitants are again of the Shemseeh sect, while, farther south, in the mountains, all are Kumreeh. In their district is a castle, which the late Dr. Eli Smith, of Beyrout, told me was called by the people Blatanos; and, therefore, this must be the castle referred to by Abulfeda*, who says, that after Saladin had

* iv. 89.

taken Ladikeeh and the castle of Sahyoor, he dispersed his troops over the mountains near, and "they made themselves masters of the Castle of Beladnoos (which he calls elsewhere Belatnus), for the Franks that were in it had already fled from it; so they took it."

At the south-east extremity of this district is the Djebel-il-Arbaeen, a very conspicuous conical hill, lower than the crest of the mountains behind it, but rising high above the plain, towards which a lofty hill runs down from it, nearly east and west, separating the district of Muhailby from that of the Kelbeeh. On this hill is a visiting-place (called Zeyareh), with a double dome, and from it there is a magnificent view of the plain and surrounding mountains. Indeed it forms so distinguishable a landmark that it was lately visited by Lieutenant Brooker, of H.M. surveying ship Tartarus, to take observations.

From it one easily descends through a well watered valley to the large village of the Merdj, which forms the outskirt of the Kelbeeh district, and is but half an hour distant from B'hamra, the village in which my mission-house is situated. This district from the character of its people, and from their alliances and relatives, is the most powerful in the mountains; and hence they were heard of by Niebuhr, Volney, and Burckhardt, who make great, and, as to Volney, absurd mistakes with respect to them. To the east of the district lies the deep valley called Wady Beyt Nasir, of which the inhabitants are wilder and fiercer than perhaps any others in the mountains. Buried in their lonely gorges they only issue from them to rob, or help their friends the Kelbeeh in some fight with an adjoining district, or with the government. This valley runs up to a mountain called Giafar Tayyâr, from a celebrated visiting-place on the top. It lies about direct east from Djebileh, and as it took me about five hours and a half to reach its summit from my house, which is three hours north-east of Djebileh, I calculate it is about 20 miles from the sea-coast. I am thus particular, because

it lies at the inmost part of the curve of mountains which sweep round Ladikeeh, and can easily be distinguished by its bald head and its height, which, after many attempts to institute with the eye a comparison between it and the mountains of Nebbee Yunis and Nebbee Matta, I should take to be superior to that of the last-named, and, therefore, the highest point of the Ansairee range. The chief village of the Kelbeeh is called Kurdahah, which gives its name to the district. Their lands run down to the sea, and are prettily diversified by hills trending westerly, between which are rich valleys, of which the most southern, Wady Beyt Ahmed, is well planted. Then rises a mountain also trending westerly which separates the district from that of Beni Ali, to the south of which most of the villages lie about this mountain; Ali Sukkur being the chief village of the plain or western part, and El Boadeh of the eastern or mountain part of the district.

To the south-east of El Boadeh is the village of Harf-il-Masatireh, where I once spent a night with Mohammed Satir, the Mehuddam of the northern section of the Keratileh, a wild race, relations of the people of my own district, the Kelbeeh. To the south of them is Matwar, the residence of the late Sheikh Ilhabeeb, whose family hold the highest rank as sheikhs, or religious heads, of the Ansaireeh. This village I still call Matwar, notwithstanding the strictures of the learned professor, Carl Ritter, who (confounding it with the Nebbee Matta) will have it that its name ought to be written differently.* But a name is a name notwithstanding all the efforts of critics.

To the south of Matwar, in a deep gorge, is the castle of Beni Israeel, which I was able to inspect on a second visit to Sheikh Ilhabeeb. It probably belonged to the crusaders, and defended this gorge, which extends to the plain westward, and, with the castle of Platanos, kept

* Erdkunde, Phœnicia, &c., passim.

under the Ansairee population of all this part of the mountains. I found the people near of the wildest belonging to the Saramitah. They, with the Beyt Yashoot, and the southern section of the Kerahileh (whose chiefs are of the house of Djadjâh), form the inhabitants of the district of Simt Kublee, which is to the south of the Beni Ali, and the most southern of the mountain districts of Ladikeeh, which are inhabited exclusively by Ansaireeh, and governed by Ansairee chiefs.

As we have now arrived at the district of Merkab, of which the western termination is the castle of the same name, situated on a hill, where the mountains touch the sea, and close the plain of Ladikeeh, we will return to that part of the plain situated under the northern part of the Ansairee range. Here is the district of Bahluleeh, governed by an Ansairee Mekuddam, Ahmed Selhab, who has been once burnt out of house and home by the Diryoos people since my first visit to him. He and his are of the Kumreeh sect, and the district is bounded by Wady Kandeel to the north, and the district of Sahyoon to the south. This last is a Mussulman district, grouped round the castle of Sahyoon, which was taken by Saladin from the Templars in his march north after the disastrous battle of Hattin, near Tiberias, in the year 1187, which for the time shattered the power of the Crusaders. The district has been governed by Mussulman chiefs, called Djindees, from that time, and their people are in constant feud with the Ansaireeh, and are as wild and fierce as they, though somewhat more advanced in wealth and knowledge. In the district are many Ansaireeh and some Christians.

To the south are the Djenneeh people, of whom the chief man is Shemseen Sultan of Beyt Shilf. They are relations of the people of my district, the Kelbeeh, and are as great robbers and as rebellious as they. I found them two months ago in contest with the government, which was rendering the plain more desolate than ever,

burning their lower villages. They have not much mountain country, but sufficient to retire to in case of need. They plunder the country from Wady Kandeel to Ladikèch, as the Kelbeeh do from Ladikeeh to Djebileh, and the Beni Ali and Kerahileh from Djebileh to Castle Merkab. Not that by any means they confine their depredations to these parts. The Kelbeeh, especially in times past and when the government is weak, have gone, and do go, as far as Kulaat-il-Husn to the south, and Mount Cassius, and even past Antioch, to the north.

The villages of the plain of Ladikeeh to the north are mostly Ansaireeh, of the Shemseeh sect. Their villages surround Ladikeeh on every side, but no Ansaireeh lives in Ladikeeh or Djebileh. The names of many of the villages end in "o" (such as Dinnserkho, Bakhtdermo, Sclago), which is not an Arabic termination. Shotfateeh, the village which Maundrell amusingly speaks of as inhabited by a race who cursed Abu-Beer and Omar, is an Ansairee village on the Nahr-il-Chebeer, about two hours east of Ladikeeh. Professor Carl Ritter* supposes this river to have been the boundary between the Phœnician state of Aradus and that of Laodicea, as the other Nahr-il-Chebeer, or river Eleutherus, was the boundary between the states of Aradus and Sidon. Laodicea was probably only rebuilt about B.C. 290, by Seleucus Nicator, and named by him in honour of his mother, for its older Phœnician name was Ramantha. Herodotus makes Phœnicia to extend from the Bay of Issus to Carmel, and an inscription to a Phœnician merchant, in Delos, places Laodicea in Phœnicia. Probably it was first colonised by Phœnicians, who may have had jurisdiction to Mount Cassius to the north, along the coast towards which lay Heraclea and Poseidion.

The plain of the south of Ladikeeh is well watered by the Nahr-il-Chebeer, in winter a deep though rather slug-

* Erdkunde, ut supra.

gish river; the Nahr Senobar, a rapid and dangerous stream after a day or two of rain; the Nahr-il-Mudeek; and out of a spur of the mountain to the north of Merkab, the Nahr-es-Seen, a short but deep stream, near which the Kelbeeh and others have committed many a deed of blood, easily concealed in the old tombs and caverns there. Over the three former streams many a ride have I had, in dark and troublous times, through the desolate plain which spreads from Ladikeeh, for some eighteen miles south-east, to my house on the lower hills. The oppressions of the government, and the violence of the Ansaireeh, permit of the existence, in most rich and fertile land, only of a few miserable villages, of which I will not now give the names.

To return to the mountains, where we had reached the castle of Merkab. Since this castle was taken by Kelaoon, Memlook sultan of Egypt, from the Knights of St. John in A.D. 1285, it has, like Sahyoon, formed the nucleus of a colony of Mussulmans, who have been able to maintain themselves in the midst of an Ansairee population, for the district is principally inhabited by Ansaireeh, with a few Christians. This castle seems to have been held for some time by the Ismaeleeh, but is now governed by a Mussulman, Mohammed Adra, whose forefather, a century or two ago, made himself master of the castle, after having murdered the former possessor, in whose service he was as Kahya. This I was told by the governor of Tartoos, who remarked that the sword had never departed from his house. At present he has enough to do to maintain himself against the Kerahileh to the north, with whom, in my time, he has had a bloody feud.

We have now come to that part of the mountains which was the seat of the Syrian branch of the famous Ismaeleeh, or Assassins, as they are called by William of Tyre, and other writers on the crusades. Here dwelt the famous sheikh, or "old man" of the mountain, whose name was a terror to the nurseries of olden time. The

Arab geographers and historians, such as Edrisi, Abulfeda, Ibn-il-Wardee, Makrisi, &c., call them Ismaeleeh and Fedaweeh, and give the names of their castles. William of Tyre speaks of their having ten castles in the part of the mountains near Antaradus (Tartoos), in the names of which Von Hammer * falls into error. Among them were Kadmoos, Masyad, Khawaby, Kahf, Ulleykah, Maynakah, Mounifeh, Rossafah, Koleyah. At Kadmoos at present there are about two hundred and fifty families of Ismaeleeh; at Masyad the same number; and at Ulleykah some fifty. In all, the Ismaeleeh of Syria are not supposed to exceed some four thousand, or at most 6,500, and they are diminishing before the superior numbers of the Ansaireeh, who are the chief inhabitants even of the districts, such as Kadmoos and Masyad, which are governed by Ismaelee chiefs.

The district to which Castle Kadmoos gives its name is to the east of Merkab. South-east from Merkab, where the mountains leave the sea and sweep round the plain of Tartoos, is the district of Khawabeh, which derives its name from the castle of that name, which is the seat of the governing family of the district, who are Mussulmans, relations of the chief men of Merkab and Tartoos. Edrisi † says that it is fifteen miles to the south-east of Tartoos, built on the mountain, and near the western side.

We have now left the fourteen districts of the province of Ladikeeh, and find in the mountains to the north-east of the three last-mentioned districts the castle of Masyad, giving its name to its district, which is under the jurisdiction of Hamah. This castle was visited, and is described by Burckhardt, and the Hon. F. Walpole, who speaks of the fear in which the Ismaelee emir was of his Ansairee neighbours.

From Kadmoos, in my first journey in these moun-

* History of Assassins, (Wood's trans.) p. 121.
† Ed. Jaubert, Paris, 1836, p. 35.

tains*, I travelled south to the district of Safeetah, which was the seat of the Ansairee chief, Fakr, in Burckhardt's time, who had jurisdiction over the whole of the southern part of the Ansairee mountains, on high ground projecting from which the tower of Safeetah stands. This district has always been one of the most noted of the Ansairee districts, and was lately governed by a certain Ismaeel Khair Bey, who, as well as his tribe, the Metawarah, in the mountains near, was originally a great robber, and was sent to Constantinople, from whence he came back, as is not unusual, in high honour, as governor of the district of Safeetah. He aspired, however, much higher, and I once met him with a great train at Ladikeeh, whither he had come to make himself conspicuous, in endeavouring to intervene between my own district and the government. About a year ago, however, he rebelled against the government himself, and, being defeated, took refuge in an Ansairee village to the east of the mountains; but the people of it had been so oppressed under his rule that they cut off his head, and those of two of his near relations. He was a young man of commanding stature, and of all the Ansairee chiefs the most powerful, or at least, noted, of his day.

Having now arrived at the most southern point of the Ansairee mountains, we will return to the north of the plain of Tartoos, which is separated from that of Ladikeeh, by the mountains which, for some distance, coast the sea shore from Merkab southwards. This plain which, as I once found to my cost, is well watered, swells out to a great width east of Tartoos. Having started, March 3rd, from my house, during a rainy time, I arrived the first night at Djelasa, a village on the spur of the mountain, under which is the fine fountain of Nahr-es-Seen. Before reaching it we were hailed by the chief man of the Kerahileh, who, with some of his people, was in the thick

* Ansaireeh and Ismaeleeh, p. 238.

bushes at the base of the hill, waiting for some prey. At the mouth of the Seen is an encampment of the wandering Arabs, called Arab-il-Mulk. After passing Banias, under Castle Merkab, we arrived in about six hours at Tartoos, having passed Dar Sofr, under which the plain begins to widen. The third day we made about six hours, crossing with great difficulty the swollen river of Nahr-il-Abrash, at about that distance from Tartoos, and spent a miserable night in the tent of an Arab chief, which afforded insufficient protection against the rain and wind. The Arab-il-Djehaysb wander in this plain. The chief looked with no favourable eye on an Ansairee companion of mine, as he had often to suffer from the mountaineers. Though we toiled during the next day over the flat plain, almost continually through water, it took us the whole of it to pass the Nahr-il-Chebeer, and arrive at the Khan of the Nahr-il-Barid, though this last is but three hours from the Nahr-il-Abrash. Here the plain is closed by a mountain over which a road of three hours leads to Tripoli. All this fine plain formed part of the territory of the Phœnician state of Arvad (Ezekiel, xxvii. 8—11), of which the metropolis was on the small island of Arvad, now Ruad, situated opposite Tartous, anciently called Antaradus. The Arvadites are mentioned (Gen. x. 17, 18) in connexion with the Sinites (near the river Seen to the north); the Zemarites, of whom the name is preserved in Zimreh, a ruined town to the north of Tartoos; and the Arkites of Tel Arka, to the south of Nahr-il-Chebeer, where was a castle taken by the crusaders. Among the most northern possessions of the Arvadites may have been Gabala, the modern Djebileh, fifteen miles south of Ladikeeh. The road to the south of Tartoos, for three or four hours, is one of the most unsafe in Syria. It is called the Heeshat Tartoos, and consists of rocks and ruined sepulchres scattered among thick myrtle groves, which give shelter to the daring and too often pitiless Ansaireeh of the mountains, which

bound the plain. These mountains from the sea look but low, though one can see higher peaks rising behind.

The Templars possessed many castles on the south of the Ansairee mountains, proving troublesome neighbours to the Assassins, whom they compelled to pay tribute. They held Safeetah, which was taken from them in A.D. 1271, by the famous Sultan Beybars, of Egypt, who subdued the Assassins also, and took all their castles A.D. 1272. Makrisi* speaks of the Franks in Djebel-il-Aamila being attacked by his troops on all sides. Among the castles belonging to the Franks in the mountains were Raphania, two hours south of Masyad, and Barin, or Mons Ferrandus, held by the Knights of Jerusalem.

Among the castles taken by Beybars the same year that he took Safeetah, were Husn-il-Akrad and Akkar (Arka), to the respective districts of which we now come, as possessing a numerous Ansairee peasantry.

The castle of Husn was held by the Knights of St. John, and is situated at the northern extremity of the Lebanon, between which and the Ansairee mountains, as I have said, is the entrance into Hamath, and the road from Hums, the ancient Emessa, to its seaport Tartoos, or Antaradus, lying nearly west of it, at a distance, according to Edrisi, of two days' journey. There are many Ansaireeh in this district, which is principally inhabited by Christians of the Greek religion, who are warlike, and could muster, I was told, 2,000 muskets. In the mountains south, called the Shaara, dwell the Denatchee Arabs, who, I was informed, came from Bagdad some 300 years ago, and number 500 horsemen. I only mention them to say that they are sometimes employed by the government to attack the Ansaireeh, and some time ago were successful in killing about seventy of them who had wandered down on foot too far into the plain on the east of the mountains, and were surprised as they were returning

* History of the Memlook Sultans, (Quatremère,) vol. i. part ii. p. 27.

from a marauding expedition, by the Denatchee horsemen. More south is Djebel Akkar, divided into three districts, in one of which, Duraib especially, there are many Ansairee peasantry, who till the ground for the Mussulman Beys of Akkar.

I have not visited the Ansaireeh of the mountains of Castle Harim, though I skirted those mountains on my road to Aleppo, nor those of the marshy district of the Roodj, on which I looked down from the mountain of the Nebbee Yunis.*

I have seen the Ansaireeh at Mersina, the seaport of Tarsus, who seemed to be well off, and I have always heard from those of them who had been there, that food was cheap and wages good, but both only to be obtained at the expense of the fever which prevails there on account of the marshy character of the plain country. Many from various causes go there from Syria; and according to a writer in the *Revue d'Orient*†, "it is more than half a century since the Ansaireeh commenced to emigrate to the pashalik of Adana, to withdraw from the vexations which they were made to endure in Syria on account of their religion. Thus the district of Ladikeeh is depopulated more and more every day."

To give some approximate idea of the number of the Ansairee population in Syria, which, as will have been already seen, is by no means small, I may state that the Arabic geography, published at Beyrout by Dr. Vandyke, of the American Board of Missions, which gives the number of the Druses at 100,000, gives that of the Ansaireeh and Ismaeleeh together at 200,000, and we have seen that the Ismaeleeh are few in number.

In the district of Akkar there are supposed to be about 2,550 or 3,500 Ansaireeh; in that of Safeetah, 29,100; in the several districts of Ladikeeh, from 70,000 to 75,000;

* The Roodj is described in Carl Ritter's Erdkunde, Theil xvii. S. 1069, from a MS. of the late Dr. Eli Smith.

† June, 1856.

in the mountains east of the Orontes, 3,750; and in the neighbouring district of Roodj, about 5,000. These numbers do not include the Ansaireeh on the east of the mountains, those of Antioch and the neighbourhood, and those along the coast to Scanderoon, so that near 200,000 may perhaps be considered without much exaggeration as the number of this people in Syria.*

Dr. Thomson, American missionary, says: "Mr. Barker assures me that about one third of the inhabitants of Tartoos are Ansaireeh, and that they abound not only in Djebel Bailan, above Scanderoon, but in the mountains of Anatolia. This corresponds with the unvarying testimony of the people themselves, who also say that their sect extends to Djebel Sindjar, and even to Persia. They are several times more numerous than the Druses, but then they are more widely dispersed. Their number cannot be less than 200,000, and most intelligent natives place it much higher. The largest body of them occupy the plain and mountains of Ladikeeh, which are in consequence called Djebel-il-Ansaireeh. Their villages are also very numerous in the region called Safeetah, above Tartoos, and in Husn and Akkar. They also comprise one third of the inhabitants of Antioch, and abound in the mountains above it." †

The tract of country of which we have been speaking is one of the most agreeable and fertile in the world. Dr. Thomson in travelling north, past Tripoli, could not help being struck with the difference between the country to the north and south of that place. In the lower moun-

* Since writing the above, the Rev. H. H. Jessup, American missionary at Tripoli, has kindly sent me the government census of adult males in the province of Tripoli. This gives 15,623 for the district of Safeetah, and 100 (!) and 500 (!) respectively for those of Akkar, and Ish-Shaarah. Mr. Jessup says: "I cannot but think their estimates in Akkar and Tortosa lacking in respect to the Nusaireeyeh. The table includes only adult males. This would give perhaps a sum total of over 40,000 Nusaireeyeh in the Safeetah district."

† Missionary Herald, March, 1841.

tains I have not seen the thermometer rise above 95° Fahrenheit in the shade, though the east wind, blowing from the deserts of Mesopotamia, is sometimes oppressive in the summer. The winter soon passes, and snow rarely falls in the plain, though once at Ladikeeh in a northerly wind, I saw ice on the morning of the 9th of March. Ague and ophthalmia are not uncommon during summer, arising from exposure to the heat in reaping the harvest in the plains, and from neglect of cleanliness. To the east of the mountains the climate is far more unhealthy, the marshes of the Orontes giving a pallid hue to all who live near, who are subject to a fever, under which the belly swells.* That part is also infested by enormous mosquitos, of which I have spoken in my account of my former passage along that valley, which reaches half-way up the mountain; and an Ansairee of the west of the mountains told me the other day, that they put him and his companions to flight, notwithstanding the thickness of their skins, when once they were spending the night in a village on the eastern side.

To the north the country about Antioch is favourable to trees from nearly every quarter of the globe, and the village of Betyâs especially, on the mountain facing Antioch, realises as far as can be, one's idea of an earthly paradise.

The mountains near Cassius are clothed with beautiful woodlands of pine and oak, where a Robin Hood might wander, and these trees were largely used for the Egyptian navy in Ibrahim Pasha's time. Magnificent walnut trees are to be found in many places.

The Ansairee mountains are far more fertile than the Lebanon, being lower and less rocky. The geographer Ibn-il-Mardee speaks of the southern part, or Djebel

* The people principally live on millet, which they sow among the sedge which skirts the Orontes, and then when it commences to sprout, cut down and burn the sedge. They sow also some of the coarse curly leaf tobacco, and have large flocks of goats and herds of oxen.

Summâk, so called from the sumach which grows there, as a part abounding in good things, and I found it to be so in passing through the length of it from Kadmoos to Safeetah.

The district where I live, in the northern part, is equally fertile, though the mulberry, fig, and olive trees have mostly been cut down in the fights with Berber and others. I have been astonished to see the progress made by fig and mulberry trees planted by me a few years ago.* In this part of the mountains grow the evergreen and other oaks, such as the uzr, which is used in smoking tobacco, and on the east of the mountains there are vast woods of the oak which produces the gall-nut. On my way to Djaafar Ṭagyân, I passed through woods of beech and oak, though I saw no trees of great size. I also saw the yellow convolvulus or scammony.

The ground is prepared for wheat and barley in October and November, and the seed then sown is reaped about the end of May. The ground then lies fallow till the next winter, when it is ploughed and prepared for the summer crops of the year following, which are sown in the spring and reaped in autumn. These consist of millet, cotton, sesame, and sometimes lentils, chickpeas, and castor oil; portions of moist ground being chosen for the water and yellow melon and cucumbers, tomatas, lupines, the egg-plant, &c. &c. The wheat of Ladikeeh will not keep long, being liable to be attacked by the weevil. The principal exports from Ladikeeh, of the produce of its neighbourhood, are millet, sesame seed, and its famous tobacco.

Ladikeeh, lying as it does in about the 35th degree of north latitude, is therefore within the zone of from 15° to

* The most troublesome weed on my farm was the myrtle, which springs up afresh unless every portion of the root is dug up. It abounds in the mountains and plains of this part of Syria. In spring, the scent of its blossoms, from a hill entirely covered with it to the south of my house, was very agreeable.

25°, which is most favourable to its production. The best grows in the more northern, higher, and rocky parts of the Ladikeeh mountains, and the people of Diryoos and the Amamarah depend mostly upon it for their support, cultivating with the greatest care the small plots before their houses, which raise a small but valuable quantity of the Aboo-Reehah. This, being afterwards smoked by the fires used during the winter, and consisting of the uzr, is then fit for the market, and shipped at Ladikeeh, mostly for Egypt and Constantinople. The tobacco which grows in the lower mountains is less valuable, and goes by the name of Skek-il-Bint.

The plant is the species called *Nicotiana rustica**, which is that raised in China and most of Asia, and of which the leaves are shorter and broader than the *Nicotiana Tabacum* or Virginian tobacco, and the flowers smaller, with rounded instead of pointed segments. It has a most pleasant perfume, and, like the Havannah cigars, possesses probably but 2 per cent of the poisonous volatile alkali called nicotin, whereas the Virginian tobacco contains nearly 7 per cent.

The tobacco is sown in ground of which the clods are broken fine, and which has been well manured with goats' dung, first in seed-beds, and then the plants are pricked out, being watered only once as they are put into the ground. The leaves are plucked when the wheat harvest is over, and strung on threads of goat's hair, and hung up in the shade till somewhat dried, when they are suspended under the roofs of the houses, to be smoked or otherwise, and left till tax-gathering comes, when they are sold in loads of 100 or 120 strings.

Such is a slight picture of the country where dwell the wild Ansaireeh, once thickly peopled, now desolate to a degree; in fact, one of the least cared for portions of the Turkish dominions, with a fierce and ignorant

* See Chemistry of Common Life, (Johnston,) vol. ii. p. 11.

population, who are rarely visited by European travellers. As we read the successive accounts of those who have passed through the land in times past, we trace the gradual ruin of the towns and the increasing desolation and depopulation of the country, which in the neighbourhood of Ladikeeh are going on at the present moment, in the burning of villages, and the death, in perpetually recurring petty fights, of their inhabitants. I, myself, since the weakening of the government during and since the Russian war, have been a witness and hearer of scenes of blood and desolation which must seemingly find their end in the utter ruin of the country, and extirpation of the population, unless matters have come to that state when they begin to mend.

I subjoin a lively picture of Northern Syria, past and present:—

"Northern Syria, though not strictly sacred, is still classic ground. A line drawn from the river Eleutherus, through the entrance of Hamath, and across the plain eastward by Hums, marks the southern boundary.

"Although Ptolemy makes Phœnicia terminate at the Eleutherus, we are not to suppose that the Phœnicians had no possessions further north. Arvad was one of their earliest settlements, and we have reason to believe that Laodicea, Garbala, and Alexandria (Scanderoon) were founded by them. The Phœnician section of Northern Syria has sadly fallen; the harbours are in ruins, most of the towns are deserted, and the adjoining coast is almost without an inhabitant. The soil is rich, but not a tenth part of it is under cultivation.

"The territory of the 'Great Hamath' formed one of the most ancient divisions of Northern Syria. It embraced the plain on both banks of the Upper Orontes,—a tract of unrivalled fertility; and probably the Nusairîyeh mountains, famed in Strabo's days for their vineyards.

"Northern Syria was the nucleus of the kingdom of the Seleucidæ; under that dynasty it attained its greatest

power. Antioch, Seleucia, Apamea, Laodicea, and many other great cities sprang into existence as if by the wand of an enchanter. The country was regarded as an earthly paradise. The votaries of pleasure in every land longed for the delicious groves of Daphne (near Antioch). The pure sky and enchanting scenery remain; and the ruins that dot the country bear silent testimony to the wealth and splendour of former days.

"To the Seleucidæ succeeded the Romans. When Hadrian divided Syria into three provinces, Antioch remained capital of the 'first,' which embraced the whole country under consideration.

"The decline of Northern Syria may be dated from the Saracenic conquest. Some of its cities were still populous when the Crusaders marched through the land.* The Mohammedan rule has since been fatal to almost all. Seleucia is deserted, Apamea is deserted, Arethusa is deserted, Larissa is deserted, and Antioch itself is dwindled down to a fourth-rate town of 6000 inhabitants. A great part of the country is desert."†

* Bertrand, who passed through the country in 1432, after the invasions of the Tartars, speaks of seeing in some places nothing but ruined houses between Hamah and Antioch. Travels in Palestine; ed. Wright: H. Bohn.

† Porter's Guide Book to Syria, (Murray,) vol. ii. p. 590.

CHAP. II.

HISTORY OF THE SECRET HERETICAL SECTS OF ISLAM.

BEFORE entering on the history of the Ansaireeh, it is necessary to give an account of some of the other heretical secret sects which sprang out of the bosom of Islam, such as the Karmatians, the Druses, and the Ismaeleeh or Assassins. Not only is it necessary to do this, for the sake of those who have not given much attention to the rise and progress of Mohammedanism, but as helping materially to the elucidation of the history of the Ansaireeh. This sect has never been of much note, and, consequently, Mohammedan authors only mention them now and then, and that slightly; while the Ansaireeh themselves are not only very ignorant, and possessed of few books, but also either entirely silent or designedly deceitful as to their origin; and few of their books have yet fallen into the hands of Europeans. The consequence is, that it is easier to write their history negatively than positively; to say what they are not, than to show what they are; and for this we must know something of those sects which have any relation to them.

It has been a common error to suppose, that, while Christianity has been split up into diverse sects, Mohammedanism has been comparatively free from heresy and schism. A saying imputed by tradition to Mohammed at once shows that this idea is without foundation. He is said to have declared, that whereas the Magians were divided into seventy sects, the Jews into seventy-one, the Christians into seventy-two, his own followers would be separated into seventy-three, of which, orthodox Mussul-

man authors suppose only one to be entitled to salvation. And, in fact, if all the several heresies which sprang into existence after the death of Mohammed were enumerated one by one, the number would be found to exceed even the liberal allowance imputed to the prophet.*

As religion and civil government are intimately connected in the Mohammedan system, we find that these schisms had their first origin in political considerations, namely, the right of succession to the government of the Mohammedan state after the death of its founder.

Mohammed died in the house of his wife Ayesha; and she is said by the Schiites, or followers of Ali, to have suppressed his special designation, in favour of Ali, of the Caliphate or civil rule, and the Imamate or spiritual jurisdiction, of Islam or Mohammedanism. That is, they say that Mohammed intended that he should be both Emir-il-Moomeneen (prince of the true believers), and Imam-il-Muslemeen (high priest of the Mussulmans); and they maintain his indefeasible right to both offices, and that though he for a time, and his children afterwards, were by man's injustice deprived of the caliphate, no human power could take from them the imamate. And in truth, though the caliphate was voted to Abu-Beer, with the pretty general consent of the chief companions of Mohammed, Ali seems to have had a better claim. Abu-Beer, indeed, was an early convert, and a favoured companion, and also father of Ayesha, wife of the prophet; but Ali was not only related by blood to Mohammed, who had been brought up and protected by Abu-Taleh, Ali's father and Mohammed's uncle, but had married his favourite daughter, Fatima, was one of his three earliest converts, and had contributed materially by his bravery to the success of his cousin. The subsequent conduct of Ali shows him too, to have been, according to the light

* See Sale's Introduction to Koran, sect. viii., for an account of some of these.

that was in him, of a mild and praiseworthy character, and he bore the preference given to rivals with an equanimity which was not shared by his zealous partisans.

When Abu-Becr died, the claims of Ali were postponed to those of the fierce Omar, and on his assassination, to those of the aged and feeble Othman, who had married two daughters of the prophet. It was only on the murder of Othman that the claims of Ali were recognised; and the Schiites as a body make a religious duty to curse those who had stood in his way—Abu-Becr, Omar, and Othman, especially Omar, who had forced Ali to give way to the first-named.

The opposition to Ali did not end with his succession to the caliphate. Telha and Zobeir, companions of Mohammed, and the determined enemy of Ali, Ayesha, took the field against him, but were defeated; Telha and Zobeir being slain and Ayesha made prisoner. But Moawiyah, who had been appointed by Omar governor of Syria, and had been deposed by Ali, proved a more formidable antagonist. He was the son of that Abu-Sofian, who, at the head of the Koreish, had so long resisted Mohammed, and at length only professed Islam under the sword. Moawiyah continued to make progress in his rebellion against Ali, till Ali was assassinated, A.D. 661; when having forced Hasan, the eldest son of Ali, to resign, he became caliph, to the exclusion of the family of Mohammed. Moawiyah was the founder of the dynasty of the Omeyades (so called from Omeyah, one of his ancestors), which ruled the Mohammedan world till the accession of the Abbasides, caliphs of Bagdad, who were descended from Abbas, an uncle of Mohammed, and obtained the caliphate in A.D. 750. This dynasty proved as zealous enemies of the descendants of Ali as the former.

Ali married no one in the life of Fatima. By her he had three sons, Hasan, Hosein, and Mohsin, of whom the last-named died young. He afterwards had eight wives, and fifteen sons in all, of which one, Mohammed, son of

Hanefeyd, was one of the most noted, as reverenced by one of the numerous sects, which were characterised by the inordinate honour paid by them to the memory of Ali. It was difficult to extinguish so numerous a progeny; but the most important scions of the race were the sons of Hosein, reckoned among the twelve celebrated imams, of whom I proceed succinctly to give the history.

Hosein, led into rebellion and then deserted by the people of Cufa, near Bagdad, was surrounded with seventy brave followers at Kerbela, in the neighbourhood of those places, by the army of Yezid, son of Moawiyah. It is impossible to read without emotion the story of his bravery and death, and every year in Persia and India his martyrdom is celebrated with all the outward marks of extreme grief; and the Ansaireeh speak of him as the third imam, the martyr of Kerbela.

Ali, his son, the fourth imam, who was twelve years old at the death of his father, refused to take any share in public affairs, and died A.D. 712, leaving such a reputation for piety, that he is styled Zeyu-il-Aabideen, the "ornament of pious men."

Mohammed, the fifth imam, led as retired a life as his father. He devoted himself to study, and is called by the Schiites the "possessor of the secret," or Il Bakir, "the investigator." The Omeyade caliph of his day, alarmed at the progress of opinions which tended to strengthen the house of Ali, caused him to be poisoned A.D. 734.

His son Djaafar, the sixth imam, called Is-Sadik, or "the just," is especially celebrated and reverenced by the followers of Ali and his family. They say that he wrote the lesser Djifi, a book of astrological predictions, as Ali had been the author of the greater. Even at the present day, and especially since the Mohammedan community has been so rudely shaken in various parts of the world, this book is referred to as having foretold all that has and is to happen. He died A.D. 765, after the caliphate had passed to the Abbasides, an event which, as we have inti-

mated, made no difference in the treatment of the house of Ali.

We now come to a part of the succession to the imamate, to which I must bespeak the reader's special attention, for on a clear understanding of it will depend the comprehension of the distinction between the various sects whose history we are giving. Djaafar designated his son Ismaeel as his successor, but on his death, A.D. 762-3, during his own lifetime, he declared his second son, Moosa, his heir. Now as Ismaeel had left children, those of the Schiites who regarded the imamate as hereditary, denied that Djaafar had a right to make a second nomination. They formed a sect called the Ismaeleeh, from which sprang the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt, who pretended to be descended (and perhaps were so) from this Ismaeel, and the Ismaeleeh or Assassins of Persia and Syria. The Druses are the followers of one of these Fatimite caliphs, Hakem-biamr-ilah, whom they worship as the chief manifestation under a human form of the Deity.

The Saffarean or Sooper monarchs of Persia, claiming to be descended from Moosa, declared him to be the seventh imam, and this is now the general opinion in Persia. The Ansaireeh, who are Imameeh, that is, acknowledgers of twelve imams, recognise the claims of Moosa, whom they call Il Kazim, or "the patient." In this they are distinguished from the Druses and Ismaeleeh, who break the line at Ismaeel, to the exclusion of Moosa and his descendants, and perhaps from the Karmatians, who appear to have done the same. Moosa was privately assassinated by order of Haroon-ir-Rasheed, the hero of the "Arabian Nights." Moosa's son, Ali, called by the Imamites and Ansaireeh, Ir-Reda, or "acceptation," was proclaimed by Il Mamoon, successor of Haroon, as his own successor in the empire, which raised such a sedition among the 30,000 descendants of Abbas that Il Mamoon was obliged to cause Ali to be privately poisoned A.D. 816.

Mohammed, the son of Ali, was the ninth imam. He

lived in privacy at Bagdad, and died at an early age A.D. 835. On account of his generosity he is styled by the Ansaireeh, Il Djawwâd, "the generous."

Ali, the tenth imam, was but a child when his father died. He was kept all his life a close prisoner in the town of Asker, by the Caliph Motawakkil, a mortal enemy of the Schiites. He pretended to devote himself to study and religious exercises, but could not thus disarm the jealousy of the caliph, who caused him to be poisoned A.D. 868. He is called by the Ansaireeh, Ali-il-Hadi, "the director."

Hassan, the eleventh imam, his son, is styled by them Il Askeree, from the place where, like his father, he lived and was poisoned.

Mohammed, the twelfth and last imam, was but six months old when his father died. He was kept closely confined by the caliph, but after he had attained the age of twelve years he suddenly disappeared. The Sonnites, or orthodox Mohammedans, say that he was drowned in the Tigris, but the Ansaireeh, and the other Imameeh, deny the fact of his death, and assert that he entered into a cave, from whence he will issue at the end of all things, to cause the followers of Ali to triumph, and to punish his enemies. He is called by the Ansaireeh "the demonstration, the chief, the director, the preacher of glad tidings and of threatenings, the hoped for, the expected master of the age and time." It is this "director," who, since the suppression of the rebellion in India, is said by the Mussulmans of Lahore and elsewhere to have already made his appearance and to be about to restore the dominion to them.*

* For an account of the first four caliphs, and the twelve imams, the reader may consult the History of Mohammedanism, by W. C. Taylor, published by the Christian Knowledge Society, chaps. vi. and vii. It is a very useful little book, though in unimportant things not entirely free from error, as in the assertion, p. 166, that "The Nosairians stop at Ali, the first imam."

Gibbon, with a few felicitous touches, sketches the rise of Mohamme-

We return now to the time of Ali, to describe the gradual rise of the several sects of his extravagant admirers.

Makrisi, in his valuable description of Egypt, says* that "even in the time of Ali, and of the companions of the apostle, there arose those who promulgated extravagant opinions concerning Ali, and that he caused some of them to be burnt, saying in verse:—

> "When I saw that the matter was abominable,
> I lighted my fire and called for Kanbar."

Kanbar being his freedman. This did not, however, quench the zeal of his followers; for, "in his time also arose Abdullah, son of Wahab, and grandson of Saba, who was the first to teach that the prophet of God delegated the right of the imamate to Ali, and explicitly assigned to him the succession, after himself, to the government of his people; and he pretended that Ali was not dead but living and that in him was a particle of the divinity; that he comes in the clouds, that the thunder is his voice, and the lightning his scourge, and that he would certainly one day return to earth and fill it with justice, as it was then filled with injustice. And from the son of Saba originated all the sects of the extravagant Rafedhis, who speak of the wakf, that is, that the imamate belonged to certain persons, as the Imameeh say that it does to the twelve imams, and the Ismaelech to Ismaeel, son of Djaafar-is-Sadik. And from him they took the saying about the absence of the imam, and that about his return after death into the world, as the Imameeh believe

danism, and the history of the successors of Mohammed. It is a pity that he could not read the Arab historians in their own language, for he might have learnt from them a terseness in writing, which would have left on the mind a more distinct impression of historical facts than his own inflated periods. See also Von Hammer, History of Assassins, book i.; and Ockley's History of Saracens.

* Edition printed at Boulak, Cairo, vol. ii. p. 356.

to this day of the "lord of the cave" (Mohammed, the last imam). This is the dogma of the transmigration of souls. From him, too, they took the saying that a particle of the Divinity resides in the imams after Ali, son of Abu-Taleb, and that, therefore, they had a positive right to the imamate. And the dais (missionaries) of the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt took their belief from hence. Ibn-Saba stirred up the sedition against Othman, son of Uffam, which caused his death; and he had everywhere many followers, and thus the Schiites increased greatly."

Among the first of those who preached heresy and then stirred up rebellion was Hakim ibn-Hashem, a native of Khorassan, a province from whence, as from the country, Persia, in which it is situated, arose the greatest corruptions of Mohammedanism. Being very deformed and anxious to give himself out as more than human, he assumed a silver veil, and was hence called Il Mokannaa, or "the veiled." He appeared in the reign of the caliph Il Mohdee, A.D. 778, and by juggling persuaded many that he could work miracles. He thus was able in a few months to collect a large army and secure numerous strong fortresses, but being closely besieged in one of these, he first poisoned the entire garrison and his own family, and then plunged into a vessel containing a corrosive liquid, so that men might think that he had been taken up to heaven. Some still believed so, notwithstanding the assertions of one of his concubines, who had hid herself, and seen all that he had done; and they clothed themselves in white, to show their hostility to the Abbaside caliphs, whose distinctive colour was black. After him a still more formidable rebel, named Baber, appeared in Irak during the caliphate of Al Mamoon, A.D. 810. He is said by an Oriental exaggeration to have put to death 250,000 Mohammedans in cold blood, besides those slain in battle. After twenty years he was defeated, seized, tortured, and executed.

In the time of Mohammed son of Ismaeel, that son of

the imam Djaafar-is-Sadik to whom we have before specially alluded, arose Abdullah son of Maimoon Kaddah, who, seeing the failure of Il Mokannaa and Baber, determined to proceed in a different way, by a secret gradual promulgation of his doctrine, rather than by open war. De Sacy supposes that before his time the sect of the Ismaeleeh, who take Ismaeel as their chief object of reverence, may have existed, but that it was not till the time of Abdullah, about the year of the Hedjirah 250, A.D. 863, that the doctrines of the sect were reduced into a system. He thinks that till his time they were only an ordinary sect of Schiites, but that he introduced materialism and general infidelity.

I do not enter now into the doctrines which he disseminated, leaving that for a future chapter, but will relate something of his history, as a preface to that of Karmat, founder of the Karmatians, with whom some suppose the Ansaireeh are identical, and to whom in truth they seem more or less allied.

Nowairi * says that Abdullah son of Maimoon was obliged to fly successively from Ahwaz (in Khoozistan, a province of Persia bordering on the Arabian Irak, near the head of the Persian Gulf), and from Busrah, and took refuge at Salameeh in Syria (a town on the borders of the desert, but situated in a fertile territory, a few miles south-east of Hamah). He died there, and his son Ahmed became supreme chief of the Ismaeleeh. He sent Hosein Ahwazi, a dai (or missionary), into Irak. Hosein arrived in the cultivated territory of Cufa, called by Arabs, Sawad, and there found Hamdan son of Ashath. He initiated

* De Sacy (see Exposé of Religion of Druses, vol. i. introd. p. 73) places great reliance on Nowairi, who takes his facts from Aboul-Hasan, said to be separated by only five generations from Mohammed son of Ismaeel, from whom he claimed descent. He says that Makrisi and Nowairi derived from one source in all probability, for they employ nearly always the same expressions, and it is possible to correct the text of one from that of the other.

him into his religion, and when dying named him his successor. According to Nowairi, Hamdan was called Karmat, from the name of his ox. Others say that the word means a man with short legs, who makes short steps. Others that it comes from the Nahatëan language, in which it is Karamita, and hence Karmat.

Another story is told by Aboulfaraj in his dynastic history, and also in Nowairi from Ibn-Atheer*; also by Bibars Mansoori and Abulfeda, who are supposed by De Sacy to follow Ibn-Atheer. De Sacy gives this story from Bibars Mansoori: —

A man of the province of Khuzistan came and established himself in the territory of Cufa, called Nahrein. He there led an austere life, and taught those that spoke with him about religion, and that *they should make prayers fifty times a day*. He lived with a gardener, and watched date palms. Being ill, he was taken care of by Hamdan Karamita, and taught him his religion, and chose twelve nakeebs. Haidsam, the governor of those parts, imprisoned him, but Haidsam's maid released him. A little after he showed himself to some of his disciples, who were labouring on lands far from the village, and told them that angels had delivered him. However, fearing for his life, he went into Syria. They called him Karamita, from the name of him who showed him hospitality.

Thus it appears that the Karamitah or Karmatians took their rise from the Ismaeleeh, but broke out into open violence, instead of being content for a time with secret propagandism.

Taking the former story as the correct one and continuing it, it is said that Hamdan Karmat sent a dai to Salameeh, and found that the house of Maimoon Kaddah were really set on aggrandising themselves, rather than honouring Mohammed son of Ismaeel; who, by the Isma-

* Ibn-Khallikin (p. 218, ed. Slane) speaks of the great chronicle of Ibn-Atheer, and says that he gives a full description of the Karmatians, from which he extracts.

eleeh, is treated with the same honour as his father, and is often confounded with him. The dai, Abdan, reported the state of the case to Karmat, who ceased to propagate the doctrine of Abdullah. Soon after Karmat disappeared, and the representative of the house of Kaddah went to see Abdan, who rejected him, and was therefore assassinated by a man called Zierwaih, at the instigation of the said descendant of the house of Kaddah, who was called Yahya, and by the Karmatians Ish-Sheikh. Zierwaih sent emissaries into Syria, who spread his doctrine among the Arab tribes of the Benoo Kelb, among whom they made many disciples. The Benoo Kelb revolted A.D. 901, and were defeated, the descendant of Kaddah being killed near Damascus; and soon after Zierwaih himself was killed, not before the Karmatians had taken Salameeh, Baalbec, &c., and slain vast numbers of the Mussulmans.

But another portion of the Karmatians in Bahreya (the north-east portion of Arabia, on the Persian Gulf, south of Bagdad and Cufa, and the country where all these events took their rise) were far more successful. According to Ibn-Schohnah it was in A.D. 888, that the Karmatians commenced their movement in the villages near Cufa. In A.D. 899, Abu-Said, the chief of the Bahreyn branch, began his victorious course, and was succeded by his son, Abu-il-Tahir, who was a still greater scourge of the followers of the Abbaside caliphs, the orthodox Mohammedans. There was a continual war in Chaldea, Mesopotamia, and Syria, and the towns of Busra and Cufa were taken, with the massacre of the greater part of their inhabitants. At length Mecca was taken by storm, and 30,000 Mussulmans put to the sword. The well Zemzem was filled with corpses, the temple defiled by the burial of 3,000 dead, and the famous aerolite, or black stone, taken away and used for an unclean use. For a time pilgrimages were intercepted, and then allowed to pass on the payment of a large sum, and at length at the instance of a Fatimite caliph of Egypt, the stone was restored. The

Karmatian power gradually declined, but even in A.D. 971, Hassan Alacem, grandson of Abu-Said, defeated in Syria the forces of the Egyptian Fatimite caliphs, and went to Egypt, where he was himself defeated by the Caliph Moezz-lideen-ilah, the grandfather of Hakem, the god-man of the Druses. After about A.D. 989, one does not hear much of the Karmatians of Irak and Syria, but they were found in Bahreyn till A.D. 1037–8; and at Mooltan in India still later. During the time of the struggle between the Karmatians and the Abbaside caliphs of Bagdad, Abu-Abdullah, an Ismaelee dai from Salameeh, went into the Moghreb, in the west country, that is the north coast of Africa, which was then governed by the Aglabites, who had rendered themselves independent of the Bagdad caliphs. Having made himself master of the country, he sent for Obeid-allah, who is supposed by De Sacy to have been, as he asserted, a descendant of the imam Ismaeel, though his enemies the Abbasides endeavoured to prove that he was of the race of Maimoon Kaddah. He had been called Said, when at Salameeh, but changed his name to Obeid-allah, when he became master of the west. He made Kairwan, the ancient Cyrene, the capital of his dominions, and so in A.D. 910 was founded the dynasty of the Fatimite caliphs, so called on account of their descent from Fatima, wife of Ali. Al Moezz, the third in succession from Obeid-allah, removed the seat of government to Egypt, and founded Musr-il-Kahirah, or Cairo, arriving in Egypt A.D. 970. It is his grandson, Maimoon, who is so especially revered by the Druses. On his accession to the throne A.D. 996, he took the title of Hakem-biamr-ilah, and after a little began to manifest his whimsical and wicked character. He was a miserable fanatic, and a wretched madman, who persecuted and murdered, now the Jews, now the Christians, now the Mussulmans, of the countries, Egypt and Syria, under his rule. At length he suddenly disappeared, A.D. 1021, having been assassinated when on one of his nightly rounds. Shortly before, a cer-

tain Meshtekin, son of Ismaeel-id-Darazi, asserted that the caliph was a manifestation of the invisible imam, and should therefore be worshipped as God. Hakem adopted an opinion so flattering, but Id-Darazi, being imprudently zealous, was obliged to fly from Egypt, and went to the Wadi-il-Teym, near Damascus, where there were many who, being affected with Ismaelee doctrines, were ready to receive his teaching. A Persian, Hamza ibn-Ali, had before been teaching these doctrines, and Id-Darazi had learnt from him, but Hamza acted with greater caution, and his writings are among the chief books of the Druses, who look on him as second only to Hakem.

I have said that in Wadi-il-Teym there were many ready to receive the doctrines of Id-Darazi, and thus form a new sect called Druses. In fact the whole of Syria was filled at that time with heretical sects, who all had much in common. Macrisi* says: "The Schiites increased more and more, till there arose the sect of the Karmatians, attributed to Hamdan-il-Ashath, styled Karmat. And there arose in Syria of the Karmatians such and such, and in Bahreyn, Abu-Said, whose government increased greatly, and great numbers entered their sect, for their dais were spread through all countries. They call their doctrine the knowledge of Il Batin (the 'inward,' that is the inner meaning of the Koran opposed to Iz-Zahir, its outward letter), which was the Taweil (interpretation or allegorisation), of the laws of Islam, and the turning them from their literal meaning to their own fancies. The Fatimite caliphs, having become strong in Western Africa, openly embraced the doctrines of the Ismaeleeh, and sent their dais to Egypt; and when they became masters of it they sent their armies into Syria. And the different sects of the Karmatians, Batenis, &c. &c., spread through Egypt, Syria, and the surrounding countries, so that the earth was full of them."†

* P. 357, continuation of words before cited. † P. 358.

Another author* says, "Obeid-allah manifested the most hateful Schiitism." In fact the Fatimite caliphs were Ismaeleeh, and they gave every possible encouragement to the extension of the Ismaelee association, and conferred office only on those who had been initiated into its mysteries. An Ismaelee lodge was established at Kairwan, and afterwards removed with the court to Cairo. Assemblies were convened twice a week, on Mondays and Wednesdays, by the Dai-al-Doater, chief dai, and were frequented both by men and women. They had a lodge called the Dar-il-Likmeh, which was well furnished with professors, books, &c., and at the lectures and disputations the caliphs frequently attended. The professors wore khalaas, or robes, and Von Hammer asserts that the gowns of the English universities have still the original form of the Arabic khalaa or kaftan.

The dais of the Fatimite caliphs prepared the way for the teachers of Hakem's divinity, and these last found Ansaireeh already existing in the parts to which they proceeded. We have already spoken of the three Ansaireeh villages near Wadi-il-Teym, and, as we shall see presently, there were Ansaireeh existing in the valley when Id Darazi arrived there. Also we have mentioned the Ansaireeh living in the mountains to the east of the Orontes. Adjoining these to the east is the Djebel-il-Aala, where the Tenoukhee family of Bateneeh, who became Druses, took refuge. There are still Druses there, and they were formerly very numerous, but have been, many of them, driven out by the Mussulmans, and forced to fly for refuge to their brethren in the Lebanon and the Hauran, the chief seats of the Druse sect.

When the Western, or Egyptian, Ismaeleeh were beginning to decline, with the decline of the power of the Fatimite caliphs (who had wrested Egypt and Syria from the Abbaside caliphs of Bagdad), a new branch of the

* El Masoodi, Establishment of Fatimite Dynasty in Africa, (Nicholson, Tubingen, 1840,) p. 112.

Ismaelee sect appeared in Persia, and afterwards in Syria, called by Arab writers the Eastern Ismaeleeh, and by Frank writers the Assassins.

A certain Hassan ibn-Mohammed-is-Sabâh was founder of this famous sect, which, though it gained great power and dominion, was rather an order like the Templars, than a kingdom. His father Ali was a distinguished Schiite of Khorassan. Hassan was originally a believer in the twelve imâms, but asserted that during an illness he had been converted to the Ismaelee doctrines, of which the caliphs of Egypt were the head. Having set out for Egypt, he was at first received with great honour; but, having had a difference with the general of the forces as to the right of succession to the throne, he was imprisoned by him at Damietta, from which he managed to escape into Syria, in such a way as to give him an appearance of having miraculous power. Having returned to Persia he gained possession by force and stratagem of the strong castle of Alamoot, in the district of Rudbar, in the north of Persia. This happened in A.D. 1090. Pretending that he was the Huddjah, or demonstration, of the invisible imam*, he procured followers among the pre-existing Ismaelee sect, and others of the like heretical and corrupt opinions, and succeeded in persuading his followers that to die for the imam or order was to procure certain felicity. He gained castle after castle in Persia, and soon obtained great power, inspiring terror in the hearts of all by the sudden assassination of caliphs and viziers.

The Assassins appeared in Syria about the same time as the crusaders, for these took Jerusalem A.D. 1099, and the Assassins converted to their interests Redwan, governor of Aleppo, A.D. 1100. Their first murder was that of the prince of Aleppo, as he was going, A.D. 1102, to raise the siege of the castle of Husn, which was being attacked by the crusaders under the Count de St. Gilles.

* Safeenet-ir-Raghib, (printed at Boulak, Cairo,) p. 216.

Hassan Sabah, the founder of the order of Assassins, reigned thirty-five years, and was succeeded by his general, Kia Busurgomid, for Hassan had slain his own sons. The succession of the children of Busurgomid, till the extinction of the order, is one awful tale of suspicion and murder on the part of the father, or parricide on the part of the son. While they caused the blood of others to flow like water, they did not spare that of their nearest relations. At last Hoolakoo, grandson of the famous Jenghiz Khan, brought to a close the rule of the Ismaeleeh, or Assassins of Persia, by besieging and taking all their castles, and putting to death their last grand-master, Rokneddeen. Their fall, A.D. 1257, immmediately preceded that of the Abbaside caliphs of Bagdad.

During this time the Ismaeleeh, or Assassins, existed almost independently in the mountains of Summâk, the southern part of the Ansairee range. According to Dhéhéby*, "The Ismaeleeh of Alamoot sent into Syria in the year 1107, or after, one of their missionaries. Many adventures happened to him, until he made himself master of several fortresses in the mountain of Sanak, and *which belonged to the Ansaireeh.*"

A man called Behram came into Syria, and took service with Togtekin, lord of Damascus, who gave him the castle of Banyas, on the site of Cæsarea Philippi, and the Ismaeleeh acquired great power in Syria. "At that time the valley of Teym, in the province of Baalbek, contained various sects, *such as the Ansaireeh*, Druses, &c.; and, when Behram attacked them, they, under the prince of the valley, defeated and killed him, A.D. 1128."† Six thousand of them were killed, A.D. 1129, by the Mussulmans of Damascus, on their failing in their attempt to deliver up

* Arabic MS. quoted by M. C. Defrémeny in Recherches sur les Ismaéliens et Bathiniens de Syrie, Journal Asiatique for May, June, 1854, and January, 1855.

† M. Defrémeny, from Ibn-il-Atthier, page 412 of Journal Asiat. May, June, 1854. See also Von Hammer, p. 78.

that city to the Franks. They were obliged to give up the castle of Banyas to the Franks, and replaced the loss of it by acquiring the castle of Kadmoos by purchase from its Mussulman owner. There they established themselves, A.D. 1132—33, and from thence harassed the Franks and Mussulmans of their neighbourhood. In 1130 they assassinated the Caliph Amin of Egypt, because he had taken the place of his uncle Nesar, who had been supported by Hassan* Sabah. The Ismaeleeh looked on the previous caliphs of Egypt as, in a measure, the representatives of the hidden imam. In A.D. 1140 they took the castle of Masyad from its Mussulman governor by stratagem, and several other castles which we have already enumerated in Chap. I. They were probably assisted in this by the Bateneeh, or secret sects, who abounded in those parts, and in all the north of Syria. In Sermeen, a day's journey from Aleppo, there were many Bateneeh, when taken by the Franks*; and in A.D. 1110 the castle of Kefr Lata, also a day from Aleppo, was taken by Tancred from Bateneeh.† There is among the Druse writings mentioned by De Sacy, an epistle addressed, about A.D. 1137, to the inhabitants of the mountains of Summâk, and another to the "Unitarians" of the same part.‡

* Apud Wilkin.

† Paul Petav. and Will. Camden speak of the Franks finding Turks, Saracens, Arabs, and other pagans in Moarra, and of certain Publicani in Area, which Baldrinus, archbishop, also mentions.

‡ Ibn Batootah (who travelled in Syria, 1325—50) mentions incidentally the great number of heretics in the north of Syria. In one place he speaks of the tomb of Omar ibn-Abd-il-Azeez, as having no Zawiyel or garden, and gives as the reason, "that there were in the country a kind of impure heretics (Rawafid, followers of Ali), who hate the ten companions, and every one whose name is Omar." He then went to Sermeen, "a great city, where the people were 'cursers,' who hated the ten, and would not mention the name of the ten, and therefore had a great mosque with only nine domes." He also speaks of a certain man of heretical opinions in Ladikeeh, who was convicted of heresy and put to death. Ladikeeh was the residence of members of the heretical noble family of the Tenookhees.

The Ismaeleeh, or Assassins, thus became neighbours of the Franks, who, as we have intimated in Chap. I., had many castles in the Ansairee mountains, and in the southern part, called Djebel-il-Aamilah or Summak. Thus they were in continual feud with the crusaders, and, A.D. 1152, killed Raymond I., prince of Tripoli, in the church of Tartoos. They were for that so successfully attacked by their neighbours, the Templars, who entered and ravaged their territory, that they were forced to pay a yearly tribute of 2000 pieces of gold.

At this time appeared Rasheed-ed-deen Sinar, son of Suleyman of Basra, as the grand-master of the Assassins of Syria. He acquired a great celebrity; and left many books, which are of chief authority among the Ismaeleeh of to-day. Many travellers and others, both Franks and Arabs, mention the state of the mountains of Summâk, and of the Ismaelee power during his time.

Edrisi, who finished his Arabic geography A.D. 1154, says of the mountains above Tartoos, where the Ismaeleeh dwelt:—"Its people are Hasheesheeh (eaters of the intoxicating Indian hemp), heretics from Islam, who do not believe in the mission of Mohammed, nor in the resurrection from the dead: may their sect be accursed!"* Benjamin of Tudela, the Jewish traveller, who passed through the north of Syria A.D. 1163, speaking of Djebileh, to the south of Ladikeeh, says: "In this vicinity live the people called Assassins, who do not believe in the tenets of Mohammedanism, but in those of one whom they consider like unto the prophet Karmath. They fulfil whatever he commands them, whether it be a matter of life or death. He goes by the name of the Sheikh-il-Hasheesheen, or the Old Man, by whose command all the cities of these mountains are regulated. His residence is in the city of Kadmoos. They are at war with the Christians, called Franks, and with the Count of

* Ed. Jaubert, Paris, 1836, p. 35.

Tripoli."* William of Tyre, the famous historian of the crusades, who died A.D. 1183, mentions, under A.D. 1169—1173, that the "Assassins" had ten castles, "around the bishopric of Antaradus," and that their number was 60,000 or more. He speaks also of the "Fratres militiæ Templi," who had castles bordering on their territory, and of the tribute of 2000 pieces of gold which they exacted yearly from the Assassins. All this in giving an account of an embassy sent by the Assassins to the king of Jerusalem, Amaury, promising to become Christians if the tribute annually paid to the Templars were remitted to them. On his return the ambassador was slain by a Templar, who was protected by the grand-master and the order; for they had heard of the request of the Assassins.†

Jacob de Vitriaco, who was bishop of Acre under William, and who died A.D. 1213, writing of the same event, speaks of the Assassins as living near Tartosa, and exceeding in number 40,000. He says that they paid 2000 pieces of gold annually as tribute to the Templars, that they might dwell in security; since the Templars, by their proximity, were able to do them much harm. He continues: They are for the most part Mohammedans, "but say that they have a certain hidden law, which it is not lawful for any one to reveal, except to their children, when they are come to adult age." He adds that the women and children say that they believe in the religion of their relations without knowing it; and that if any son were to reveal the law to his mother he would be killed without mercy.‡

Ibn-Djubair, an Arab of Andalusia in Spain, in travelling through Syria A.D. 1183, speaks of the Ismaeleeh on his way to Hamah. He says that behind Muarra, "in the mountains of Lebanon, are castles of the impious Ismaeleeh, a sect who have gone out of Islam, and claimed

* P. 59, ed. Asher.

† Lib. xv. pp. 31, 32.

‡ Gesta Dei per Francos, p. 1143.

divinity for a certain man-devil, Sinan by name, who has deceived them by vanities and false appearances, so that they have taken him as a god, and worship him, and give their lives for him, and they have arrived at such a pitch of obedience as to throw themselves down from a precipice at his command."*

Brocardus Monachus† says: "On the eastern side of Antaradus are certain low mountains, and this district is called that of the Asisini."

Ibn-il-Wardee, who quotes from Ibn-Atheer and Medj-ith-Dthahab of Massoodee, speaking of Djebel Summâk, says that "It contains cities and villages and forts and castles, and most of its people are Ismaeleeh *and Druses*, and on it grows the sumach."‡

Abulfeda, who was prince of Hamah, A.D. 1310—30, speaks of the town of Masyaf (Masyad) as having a strong fort, and being the centre of the Ismaelee order.§

Marco Polo, who in 1271 travelled through Asia, mentions the Assassins of Persia and Syria.‖

Sinan resided in Castle Kahf. It is said that in A.D. 1176 the inhabitants of Summâk took occasion of some words of his, to the effect that no one should deny anything to his brother, to break out into licentiousness and incest, and he caused some of them to be put to death. Ibn-Jubair mentions that eight years before his arrival in Syria, A.D. 1183, some of the people called Ismaeleeh (whom he describes as so numerous that none but God could number them) became so corrupt in a village called Bab, near Aleppo, that they were attacked and exterminated by the Mussulmans.ǂ

The Assassins endeavoured to assassinate the great Saladin more than once when he was before Aleppo, and

* Ibn-Jubair, (Wright, Leyden, 1852,) p. 256.
† Novis orbis, (Basil, 1532,) fol. 301.
‡ Arab. MS.
§ Geography, (ed. Reinaud and Slane,) p. 229.
‖ Lib. i. c. 21.
ǂ As above, p. 251.

therefore he went to attack Masyad A.D. 1176, but was persuaded to give up the siege at the intercession of his uncle, prince of Hamah, being the more ready to do so as he had been in real fear of the Assassins, having had a very narrow escape from death. In 1192 Conrad of Montferrat was killed by two Assassins, at the instigation, there is little reason for doubt, of Richard Cœur de Lion. Sinan died A.D. 1192—93. In A.D. 1250 the Old Man of the Mountain sent to demand a present from Louis IX. at Acre; but the Templars and Hospitalers sent back demanding a present for the king, and obtained it.

But now the power of the crusaders, Templars, and Hospitalers, and of the Assassins, was drawing to a close, being about to fall before the celebrated Beybars or Malik-id-Dhabir, sultan of Egypt, of the Memlook dynasty. The Hospitalers, or Knights of St. John, being hard pressed, sent an embassy begging him to maintain peace in that part of the country which borders on the Ismaeleeh, and he would only consent on their remitting the tribute which they received from the Ismaeleeh, namely, 200 pieces of gold and 100 measures of corn. In 1269 Beybars took the chief castles of the Knights Templars, and of St. John, in those parts, namely, Safeetah and Husn, and the Ismaeleeh paid to him the tribute before paid to the knights; but after a short respite their castles, too, were taken one by one; and last of all Muneika, Kahf, and Kadmoos in 1272, in which year the Friday prayers were celebrated in them.*

After the end of the thirteenth century we hear little of the Ismaeleeh of Syria. Ibn-Batoutah, the Arab Moghrebbin traveller, who was in Syria between 1325–50, speaks of the castle of Sahyom, and then says: "And I journeyed from it, and passed by the castle of Kadmoos, then by the castle of Maynakah, then by the castle of Ulleyhah,

* Makrisi, History of the Memlook Sultans, vol. i. part ii. p. 3: Quatremère, Paris, 1840.

then by the castle of Masyad, and these castles belong to a people called the Ismaeleeh, and also the Fedaweeh; and no one enters among them besides themselves, and they are the arrows of Il Malik-id-Nasir, by whom he reaches his enemies in Irak and elsewhere." He adds, "that they were paid by him for this, and used poisoned knives." * Thus from time to time we read of assassinations attributed to them. An Arab author, who died at Damascus A.D. 1349, speaks of the Ismaeleeh as having in his time Masyad, &c. There were nawabs or viceroys placed in the Ismaelee castles by Beybars.† Perhaps from them are descended the present emirs of the castles; for they told Burckhardt, who visited Castle Masyad, that they had been possessors of it since the time of the Malik-id-Dhabir, Beybars, as acknowledged by the firmans of the Porte‡; though the Ismaeleeh of to-day told Dr. Eli Smith and Mr. Walpole, who visited them in 1848, and 1850—51, that they had come from Damascus A.D. 1010; and they declared to the latter that *they had chased Ansaireeh out of the castles.*

Abd-il-Ghanidj in-Nabulusi visited Kadmoos in A.D. 1693, and found the emir of Kadmoos, and his brother of Masyad, to be of the Tenookhee family, which settled in the time of the Greeks in Djebel-il-Aala, and were Batenians, some of them being Druses at the present day.

Niebuhr, in his description of his journey in Syria A.D. 1764, speaks of the Ismaeleeh, but says little about them, and that little is incorrect. He says: "The number of the Ismaeleehs is not great. They live principally at Kellis, a town between Shogher and Hamah; as also in Gebel Kalbie, a mountain not far from Latachia, between Aleppo

* Travels of Ibn-Batoutah, published by the Société Asiatique, Paris, 1843.

† M. Defrémeny, Jour. Asiat. January, 1855.

‡ Burckhardt's Travels in Syria, (London, 1822,) p. 152.

and Antioch. They are called Keptun, from the name of a village in this country."*

Von Hammer† says: "Remains of the Ismaelites still exist both in Persia and Syria, but merely as one of the many sects and heresies of Islamism, without any claims to power, and without the means of obtaining their former importance, of which they seem, in fact, to have lost all remembrance. The policy of the secret state-subverting doctrine of the first lodge of the Ismaelites, and the murderous tactics of the Assassins, are equally foreign to them. Their places of abode are both in Persia and Syria, those of their forefathers, in the mountains of Irak, and at the foot of Anti-Lebanon.

"The Persian Ismaelites recognise as their chief, an imam, whose descent they deduced from Ismael, the son of Djaafur-is-Sadik, and who resides at Khekh, a village in the district of Koom, under the protection of the Shah. As, according to their doctrine, the imam is an incarnate emanation of the Deity, the imam of Khekh enjoys to this day the reputation of miraculous powers; and the Ismaelites, some of whom are dispersed as far as India, go in pilgrimage, from the banks of the Ganges and Indus, in order to share his benediction. The castles in the district of Rudbar, in the mountains of Alamoot, are still inhabited to this day by Ismaelites, who, according to a late traveller, go by the general name of Hosseinis."

We have thus related briefly the history of the secret heretical sects of Mohammedanism, in that of the original Ismaeleeh, the Karmatians, the Western Ismaeleeh, from whence sprang the Druses, and the Eastern Ismaeleeh, or Assassins, and this, as a necessary preparation to all that we know of the history of the Ansaireeh,

* Page 361. The reader may remember that the Kelbeeh are Ansaireeh, and Kefteen is the chief village of the Druses in Djebel-il-Aala.

† Page 211.

whose sect came into existence in the time of the Karmatians. We have omitted to relate that history in its proper place, that we may treat of it in a separate chapter.*

* For further information about the Karmatians the reader may consult D'Herbelot, Bib. Orient., article Carasmita. The history of Hakem, the deity of the Druses, is given by De Sacy in his exposition of their religion. Von Hammer has given a history of the Assassins, which has been translated by Wood. As a most useful abridgment of these authors, see Taylor's History of Mohammedanism and its Sects; also Sale's Introd. to Koran, sect. viii. Gibbon, chap. 52, gives a pithy account of the Karmatians.

CHAP. III.

HISTORY OF THE ANSAIREEH.

SYRIA consisted originally of two districts. The first, Aram Damesk (2 Sam. viii. 6), was colonised by Aram son of Shem, and included Aram Zobah (2 Sam. viii. 3, 5), a district most probably extending from the right bank of the Orontes to Aleppo and the Euphrates. The second division of the country, including Gilead, all Palestine west of the Jordan, and the mountain range northward to the mouth of the Orontes, was colonised by the descendants of Canaan the son of Ham.* We have already spoken of the Phœnician state of Arvad, or Aradus, and of the Phœnician town of Ramantha, afterwards Laodicea; as having possessed the plains under the Ansairee mountains. It is probable that the inhabitants of the west of the mountains were under their sway, while those of the east may have been under that of Hamath the Great. These mountains would naturally be the refuge of the neighbouring states in the plains, on the invasion of Syria by the Assyrians, Egyptians, and Greeks. Now a part of the present Ansaireeh are probably, and almost certainly, the descendants of the ancient mountaineers and those who took refuge among them. This is the opinion of the late Dr. Eli Smith, Dr. Vandyke, Dr. Thomson, and others of the American missionaries in Syria, as I have at different times learnt from themselves. They think that these people became impregnated with the Gnostic heresies, and hence that corrupted form of

* Porter's Syria, Introd. p. xxii. xxiii.: Murray.

Christianity which is part of their religion. Volney says* that it is probable that the Ansaireeh have some of the old Gnostic rites, "for that, notwithstanding the vicinity of Antioch, Christianity penetrated only with the greatest difficulty into those districts; it reckoned but few proselytes there, even after the reign of Julian; from that period till the invasion of the Arabs it had little time to establish itself; for it is not always with revolutions of opinions in the country as in towns. The progress which that religion was able to make among these rude mountaineers only served to smooth the way for Mohammedanism, more analogous to their tastes; and there resulted from the dogmas, ancient and modern, a shapeless mixture, to which the Old Man of Nasar owed his success." But though I have no doubt that a part of the present inhabitants of the mountains are the descendants of the ancient Canaanites, whose graves and sites of tombs on every high hill still remain, and are visited by the Ansaireeh of to-day, the Gnostic ideas may well have been introduced into their religion in its cradle in the East, for that religion certainly came thence, and doubtless found in Syria, as is asserted, an ignorant population ready to receive it, and, perhaps, in some things, to add to its former superstition.

But well-established tradition, and difference of physiognomy, prove conclusively that not all the present inhabitants of the mountains of the Ansaireeh are the original inhabitants of that region. Part, at least, have come from those regions whence came the religion of the sect.

That sect is divided into two principal parts: Shemseeh, so named from Shem, the sun, and also called Mawakiseh, Gaibeeh, and Shemaleeh; and Kumreeh, also called Kelazeeh. Now I will show that the Shemseeh are the original people of the mountains, and the Kumreeh a people who came from the east, from Djebel Sindjar in Mesopotamia, and elsewhere.

* Volney's Travels in Syria, vol. ii. p. 6.

It has been already seen that there are many Ansaireeh living in Bagdad, and the road from there would naturally lead by Djebel Sindjar, and the town of Salameeh, 4½ hours S.E. of Hamah, to the territory of that place, which is bounded on the west by the Ansairee mountains. The missionaries of the sect, in passing into Syria, might naturally propagate their doctrines among the Arab tribes of Mesopotamia. The Bagdad sheikh, Hadj Mohammed, who visited me in the mountains, accordingly asserted that Sheikh Hhabeeb's family, the religious chief of the Kumreeh sect, were from Sindjar, as well as the Kelbeeh, and gave as proof that there is still there a mountain called Sin-al-Kuloob (so he called it), or dog's tooth. He himself was one of the Kumreeh sect, having just come from Bagdad with the present of a valuable mare for Sheikh Hhabeeb; and he spoke against the sheikhs of the Shemseeh, one of the chief of whom, Sheikh Maroof of Antioch, had incited the government against him, and rendered necessary his visit to Syria.

Sheikh Hhabeeb also himself once told me that his relations and people were older than the Osmanlees in Syria (who took it under Sultan Selim, A.D. 1518); and that, having been driven out from Djebel Sindjar (now chiefly inhabited by the Yezidees, or devil-worshippers), they had come by leave of the government to the plains of Hamah, in the year of the Hedjrah 603 (A.D. 1205), at the invitation of some of their sect, who, being weak, had invited them to come and help them to possess the country. On the people of the mountains coming down upon them, they were allowed by the government to attack them; and this they did, driving out the inhabitants, who were Kurds, as he said the names of the villages ending in o, as before alluded to, attested. He also asserted that their ancestors possessed the castles of Kadmoos, Naasyad, &c.

The Ansairee lad of whom I have spoken in the Preface tells me that his people swear by a certain sheikh,

Is-Sindjaree. Mr. Walpole* found the same tradition among them. They told him that "during the time of the Caliphs of Damascus, their people lived in the mountains of Sindjar, and that the Caliphs waged war against the inhabitants of the Ansairee mountains, and exterminated them," when they got possession.

Now it is certain that the Kelbeeh, within the last few hundred years, have come over from the east of the mountains, and opened a road for themselves to the sea; conquering the Beni Ali to the south,—who are asserted, by the Kelbeeh and by others, to have been originally Kurds converted to the Ansairee religion, — and the Muhailby people to the north, who are uniformly declared to be the oldest inhabitants of the mountains, and of the Shemseen sect. The Diryoos people are of the same sect, and I was told by a Diryoos man that the Muhailby and Diryoos people, and two other families in the plain, were descended from two brothers. Just below my own village is a deserted one, once inhabited by the Keratileh, part of the original inhabitants of the present Kelbeeh territory, who are said to have been of the sect of the Muhailby, and have descendants in the villages of Ain-it-Zeeneh; a man of the Keratileh being now resident as a peasant in the village where my house is.

The tradition that the Kelbeeh came from the other side of the mountains is told circumstantially, and there is no reason to doubt it. Ahmed the son of Makloof was the first to come to the west of the mountains, with his son Muhanna. He built most of the visiting places in the mountains. Muhanna had eight sons, one of whom was the ancestor of the house of Hasoon, and another brother that of Beyt Ali, Beyt Djirkis, and Beyt Ahmed; the four ruling houses of the Kelbeeh. Beyt Aloosh are said to have descended from a brother of Muhanna, and another branch of less influence from a servant of the

* Ansayree and Assassins, vol. iii. p. 343.

same, though it is confessed that there is less certainty about this.

The passage, from the east, of the Kelbeeh and others of the Kumreeh sects, such as the Kerabileh and Beyt Ammon, seems to have been pretty simultaneous. As I have said, Chap. I., the Amamarah, who as well as other western tribes have relations on the east of the mountains, were originally Kumreeh.

Ahmed Selbah, Mekuddam of Bahluleeh, told me that the ruling families of the Beni Ali had come originally from the east of the mountains. He also told me that the house of Shemseen Sultan, of the powerful tribe of the Djenneeh, who are also of the Kumreeh sect, was descended from men who had come from the other side of the mountains. This was also asserted to me by an intelligent young sheikh of the Djenneeh, residing at Kumeen. He said that the Shemseen people were descendants of men of good family, who came about 400 years ago from Djebel Sindjar, and first settled in the district of Kadmoos; and then, 120 years since, removed to their present district; where, having killed the former rulers at a feast, they became chief. The brother of Shemseen Sultan also told me that the family had come from Kadmoos.

Thus we see that the Kumreeh are comparatively recent in the country, and probably from the parts of Bagdad and Djebel Sindjar.

The young sheikh of Kumeen also said that the Muhailby people were the oldest inhabitants of the part of the mountains where they live, which originally belonged, in part at least, to the Kurds; and he declared that the Beni Ali were Kurds. He spoke also of many of the present Ansaireeh having become so from living among that sect where predominant. He also said that the castles in the mountains had once been in their hands.

I have been informed by M. Wörtabert of Hasheya, that the inhabitants of the three Ansairee villages near there, who are without doubt of the earliest converts to the sect

in Syria, are Shemseeh. The Muhailby and Diryoos people, who are certainly also the earliest of the sect in Syria, are Shemseeh, as are also the people to the north, and about Antioch, for the most part, who seem to have been driven out of the mountains by the more powerful sect of the Kumreeh. The sheikhs of the two sects are very hostile to one another, no man of one sect learning from a sheikh of the other; and there is sufficient diffence in the tenets and customs of the two. The sheikhs not unfrequently succeed in fomenting war, to give vent to their sectarian hate. The Shemseeh hold to their religion far more firmly, or rather obediently, than the Kumreeh; and the two sects seem originally to have been separated by distance of territory. There is a difference of physiognomy among the various tribes. I should say that the Beni Ali had a harsh Kurdish appearance; while many of the people of the plains and the Shemseeh have a lustrous eye, more cunning, but otherwise not unlike that of the Maronites, who are of the original soft Syrian inhabitants of Lebanon.

The Kelbeeh and other Kumreeh have a more Persian or Arab physiognomy. This distinction may be partly fanciful, but I think not entirely so. Every one acquainted with Syria knows how the tribes vary in cast of countenance. I myself noticed such distinctly marked features among the Metawalee of the mountains just south of the Ansairee range, who hold a religion near akin to that of the present Persians, that I was able afterwards often at once to distinguish a Metawalee when I met him. These considerations, as well as others, may be followed out and verified, or the reverse, by future travellers.

Having said so much for the origin of the Ansaireeh as a race, I proceed now to consider the origin of their name.

They are called by Arab authors, In-Nusaireeyeh, that name being given as early at least as about the year A.D. 1021, by Hamer and Baha-ed-deen, the great Druse teacher.

"The Formulary of the Druses," says De Sacy*, "speaks of a sectary whom it calls Nosairi [so written in French], and who is certainly the chief of the sect in question," the Ansaireeh. "The 44th question is this:—How have the Nosairis become separated from the Unitarians, and abandoned the Unitarian religion? Answer: They have become separated in following the doctrine of Nosairi." Hamza also mentions the sect under the same name in his refutation of one of their books. Hence evidently this name of the sect existed as early as A.D. 1021, or a few years later, and was ascribed by the author of the Druse Formulary, who shows great knowledge of the doctrines of the Ansaireeh, to a certain Nasair.

Now there has been much uncertainty and great controversy as to whether this was the real origin of the name thus given to them, and I was myself in doubt about it till the very time of writing this; after having anxiously perused the Arab MS. in my possession, and all other extracts given of their books by various authors. But I have just stumbled on a passage in the said MS., which, compared with the extracts of an Ansairee book given by Niebuhr, and with what is said of the sect in Dr. Vandyke's Arabic Geography, leaves no doubt that the derivation given by so good and early an authority as the Druse apostle Hamza is the right one.

To mention first some other derivations given of the name. Richard Pococke says†, that the Ansaireeh "may be the descendants of the people called Nazerini, mentioned by Pliny (Hist. v. 23) as divided from the country of Apamea by the river Marsyas," where he says, "Cœle

* De Sacy's Exposé de la Religion des Druses, (Paris, 1838,) vol. ii. p. 260.

† Travels in Syria in 1738, vol. ii. p. 208.

In my MS. p. 86, Ali is called the father of the Sibtain, that is two tribes of the children of Israel. A Christian scribe once told me that he had seen in a private letter of Sheikh Ilhabeeb, the expression, Is-Sibteyn il Kerâm, "the two honourable tribes," as applied to the Ansaireeh.

habet Apamiam, Marsyâ amne divisam à Nazerinorum tetrarchiâ."

De Sacy, after giving an extract from the Syriac Chronicle of Bar-Hebræus, to which we shall refer presently, in which the latter ascribes the origin of the sect to a certain old man who lived in a village called Nasaria (in his Arabic history of dynasties, Nasrana), says, "it appears from this text that the sect of the Nosairis derives its name from that of the village of Nasaria, where dwelt the founder of that sect." * However, in another place, he says, "I cannot well say (Je ne saurais dire) whether the name, Nosairis, is derived from that of the village Nasraya or Nasrana." †

Since, in the present day at least, the Ansaireeh rarely call themselves such before others, giving themselves usually the name of Fellaheen, or peasantry, which is really a suitable one for their position, some have looked on this as a mere term of reproach among their enemies which the Ansaireeh would not acknowledge, as the Druses do not call themselves by that name, but "Muwahhedeen," or "Unitarians." But it is not unusual for the members of a sect to dislike to be called after the name of its author, which sometimes brings all the prejudice felt by their enemies against the failings of that author on the tenets taught by him and held by his followers; and though the Ansaireeh do not usually style themselves such openly, or in their books, or when alone (for then, as I shall presently show, they employ a different name, derived from that of another very celebrated apostle of their sect), yet they do frequently call themselves Ansaireeh, using the name as one properly belonging to them. So unhesitatingly asserts the Ansairee lad: and I have myself often heard them, either in joke, or when serious and in a great rage, use the expression, "May God have no mercy on any one who has died an

* Exp. Rel. Druses, vol. ii. p. 565. † P. 567.

Ansaireeh!" when they mean to speak of those immediately about them, or even of themselves and their sect in general. So that Dr. Wolff is certainly at fault when he derives the term from the diminutive of Nussâra, Christians, supposing that their adversaries reproach them for the mixture of Christianity introduced into their religion by calling them "little Christians." *

To return to the true derivation of the name. Dr. Vandyke, in his Arabic Geography, derives it from a certain Nusair in-Namaree†, but on asking him for his authority he could not remember it, having derived what he says of the Ansaireeh from various sources, without giving in all cases his authority, as the object of his book did not require the doing so. He also gives an extract from Abulfeda, who, on the authority of Ibn-Saeed says, "The Nusaireeh are so called from Nusair, a liberated slave of Ali the son of Abu-Taleb." Now I find in my Arabic MS., among the names of the "Bab" or "Door," in the "eleven appearances which God has granted us to know, and brought us to remember" (in the first of which the celebrated Salman-il-Farisee is the "door"), this name given as the "door" of the eleventh, "Abu-Shuaib Mohammed ibn-Nusair il Beeree in-Numairee il Abdee, May the favour of God be upon him! And he is called Abu-il-Kasim (for with Arabs a father, when his eldest son is born, receives a title from him, the father of such and such a one, as Abu-Shuaib, the father of Shuaib, for instance), and among his Arabic titles are Abu-il-Talib and Abu-il-Hasan." In the above name, Abu-Shuaib is the title from the son; Mohammed is the name; Ibn, or son, of Nusair,

* Journal of German Oriental Society, vol. iii. p. 302, &c., note. So the Jesuit Missionaries. See Jowett's Christian Researches.

† Arabic Geography, published at Beyrout, 1852, p. 106. Dr. Vandyke writes Namaree. My Ansairee MS. gives Numairee, which is confirmed by another Ansairee book. Namir son of Kasit, and Numair son of Aamir, each gave his name to an Arab tribe, as Namaree and Numairee.

is the patronymic; and In-Numairee, &c., are the titles from some place or quality in the person or his father. Now the word Namairee is used in an Ansairee book of festivals noticed by M. Catafago, in the Journal Asiatique.* And on comparing the first part of the name here given to the "door" with that of one of the apostles of the Ansaireeh given by Niebuhr † in his extracts from an Ansairee book, we shall find them identical. Among the seven apostles of the Ansaireeh, among which are reckoned Mohammed, Salman, Hamrudan Abdullah (probably a mistake for Abu-Abdullah ibn-Hamdan), and Mufdil (whose name is given in my Arabic MS. as the "door" of the eighth appearance), is found Abuschaiib, as Niebuhr writes the Arabic name. This then is the same person as that mentioned above, and Niebuhr goes on to say that the Ansairee author names a certain Ishak as the greatest enemy of the Ansaireeh, "because he had wished to kill our lord Abu-Schaiib." This Ishak was the founder of the sect of the Ishakians, who are joined by Ish-Sharestanee with that of the Ansaireeh or Nasaireeh‡, who, as I think it will now seem pretty certain, derived their name of Nusaireeh, by which they are distinguished in Arabic authors, and by which they are commonly called to-day in Syria, from Nusair.

Since writing the above, I have, by again consulting the Ansairee MS. in my possession, made a discovery which sets this matter at rest, combined as it is with the assertion of the Ansairee lad, who has just informed me that his people call themselves Beni Nusair, saying that their ancestor was Nusair, and has told me also that his people curse Ishak.

This discovery I made with the clue given to me in Niebuhr's book, which led me to search more carefully

* Feb. 1848, page 153.

† Niebuhr's Travels in Syria, vol. ii. p. 357, &c.

‡ Sharestanee, Milal oo Nahal, quoted by Pococke, Spec. Hist. Arab. (Ox. 1806, ed. White,) p. 261.

after the name of Abu-Shuaib ibn-Nusair. I find now that Nusair, and Abu-Shuaib, his son, lived in the time of Hassan il Askeree, the eleventh imam, from whom the Ansaireeh derive, as we shall hereafter see, most of their doctrines and rites, or at least ascribe them to him.

In giving a list of the names bestowed on Ali in various languages, the repeating of which forms an important part of their religious services, as I see from their book and hear from the Ansairee lad, the authority alleged is the "Egyptian epistle." Now the contents of this epistle are said to be derived from the Emeer Moezz-id-dawleh*; by him from Mohammed ibn-Haidarah ibn-Mukatil il Kat'ell; by him from Ibraheem ir-Kaka'ee; by him from the Sayid *Abu-Abdullah il Hosein ibn-Hamdan il Khasebee* (May God sanctify his spirit!); by him from Abu-Mohammed Abd-Allah idj-Djannan idj-Djenbalance; by him from Muhammed ibn-Djundub†; by him from Abu-Shuaib Muhammed ibn-Nusair; and lastly by him from the last Hassan the Askeree.‡

We thus see the position held by Nusair and his son, with reference to the foundation of the sect, and that he was a generation or two previous to Hosein ibn-Hamdan, who, as we shall presently show, was the great apostle who spread the Ansairee religion "in all countries."

But I will first refer to another passage in the MS., which confirms what I have said about Nusair and Abu-Shuaib. It occurs in one of the most solemn parts of

* This Moezz-id-dawleh must be that one of the three sons of Buiah who became vizier of Bagdad, when that family gained power in Persia, and were the real rulers of the Abasside Caliphs. Moezz-id-dowleh deposed the Caliph Mustakfee. He was a most bigoted adherent to the sect of Ali, and, when his power was fully established, commanded the first ten days of Moharram to be set aside for a general mourning over the death of Hosein. He entered Bagdad A.D. 945, and died A.D. 965-6. See Malcolm's Persia, vol. i. p. 169.

† He is mentioned as the orphan or disciple of Abu-Shuaib, in the "eleventh appearance."

‡ MS. p. 77.

their service, the "first Kuddâs," or mass. After referring to the titles of Ali as a species of invocation, it goes on: "We mean, and seek, and refer to him to whom the first believer referred, and the priority of whose essence the Unitarians have indicated. We refer to him, as did refer our sheikh and lord and crown of our heads and learned of our age, the sheikh of the period, and exemplar of the season, *Abu-Abd-Allah il Hosein ibn-Hamdan;* we refer to him to whom did refer *his* sheikh and *his* lord (Seyyid, master, i. e. teacher), Abu-Mohammed Abd-Allah iz-Zahid il Djannan (the ascetic, the intellectual); we refer to him to whom did refer the 'orphan' of the time, *Mohammed ibn-Djundub.*" *

We here see the same names, in same order, as in the other passage; the last-named being, as I have said in a previous note, the "orphan," or disciple of the "door," Abu-Shuaib son of Nusair. He is called the "orphan" of the time, because he was taught by Abu-Shuaib, who himself learned from Hassan il Askeree, and would, therefore, be himself in the time of Mohammed, the last imam, the son of Hassan il Askeree, who is called the lord of the age and time, as being the last manifestation of the Deity in human shape, and still existing, though concealed, on the earth.

We will now proceed to speak of the other name, which is only given to the Ansaireeh by themselves. It is taken from a certain Abu-Abdullah il Hosein ibn-Hamdan il Khaseebee, who is held in the greatest honour by the sect, and is spoken of as he who spread their religion in all countries.

He is referred to in the Ansairee manuscript in my possession in several places, and that always with great respect, and as an authority for the principal parts of doctrine and ceremonies. On page 73, he is given as the authority for the fifty-one prostrations to be used during

* MS. p. 130, 131.

the daily prayers; on page 77, he is mentioned as above, as forming one of the chain of those who had handed down the name of Ali; on page 130, he is spoken of in the "first mass," as above; on page 133, he is given as the authority for the "second mass;" and on page 144, he is spoken of as he "who made manifest to us the religion in all lands."*

In the third of the three masses of the Ansaireeh given by Joseph Catafago, in the first volume of the Journal of the German Oriental Society†, he is spoken of by the high title of Rubb (Lord): "There is no Lord but our Lord, our Sheikh and Master, Hosein ibn-Hamdan il Khaseebee, the ark of security, and eye of life." In the 98th question of the Ansairee Catechism, given in the third volume of the same journal‡, it is asked: "Which of our sheikhs spread our faith in all lands?" Answer: "Abu-Abdullah il Hosein ibn-Hamdan." In the prayer of the day of Noorooz, given by M. Catafago in the Journal Asiatique§, "Our master, Il Khaseebee," is referred to as having explained a certain point "in one of his epistles," and having "rendered it clear in his treatise Siyakat;" and again, as having spoken of the merits of the Persians. In the book, from which extracts are given by Niebuhr, Hosein is mentioned in the fifth place, as having appeared in different forms, at the seven different periods of the manifestation of the Deity; the seventh and last time being called Hamdan.‖

From this man, the Ansaireeh among themselves call themselves the "Khaseebeeh," from Il Khaseebee, his title, his name being Hosein, his father's name Hamdân, and his son's name Abdullah. The Ansairee lad has in-

* P. 84. He is also mentioned as authority for other names of Ali, and as having derived his information by tradition from Hassan il Askeree.

† P. 353. ‡ P. 302.

§ For February, 1848. Notice on Ansaireeh by Joseph Catafago.

‖ Niebuhr, vol. ii. p. 315, &c.

formed me that it is a common thing to swear "by the truth of all that the law of the Khaseebee said;" but they have never so sworn before me, though I have heard a legion of other oaths. They also say, "Takul Shayât dirbat il Khaseebee;" in their vulgar language literally, "Thou wilt eat the things of the blow of the Khaseebee," that is, thou wilt be punished by him. In my MS.*, reference is made to the Tâyfeh il Khaseebeyah, the "Khaseebee people," and in the Catechism given by J. Catafago†, the 99th question is: "Why do we bear the name of the Khaseebeeh?" Answer: "Because we follow the teaching of our sheikh, Abu-Abdullah il Hosein ibn-Hamdan il Khaseebee." And in the summary of the contents of an Ansairee book given by J. Catafago ‡, it is said of the middle of the month of Shaban, that it is the last of the "Khaseebee year."

We have thus shown, first that the name of An-Nusaireeyeh (commonly called in Syria Il-Ansaireeh), given to the Ansairee sect by their enemies and by the authors who treat of them, is acknowledged by themselves and referred to a certain Nusair, whose son Abu-Shuaib, it appears, was the first apostle of the sect, and derived his teaching immediately from the chief authority of the sect, Hassan il Askeree, the father of the last imam. We have also seen, secondly, that the apostle who spread their religion was a certain Hosein ibn-Hamdan, who lived after the time of Nusair, and is he from whom the sect derive that designation which they generally adopt among themselves.

We have next to consider when and how this sect took its rise; and here I fear, notwithstanding all that can be done, the same amount of uncertainty will remain as to the exact relation in history and doctrine of this sect with the Karamitah or Karmatians, as in that of the Karmatians with the original Ismaelech.

* P. 49. † Ubi supra.

‡ Journal Asiatique, ubi supra.

Gregory, surnamed Bar-Hebræus, and called in Arabic Abulfaradj, in his Syrian Chronicle* gives the following account of the origin of the Ansairee sect:—

"Since many desire to know the origin of the Nazaræi, accept from us the following. In the year of the Greeks 1202 (A.H. 270, A.D. 891), there appeared a certain old man in the region of Akab [the same, says Asseman, is Cupha, a city of Arabia, as Bar-Hebræus notes in his Chronicle], in a village which the inhabitants call Nazaria." In his Arabic dynastic history, Gregory Abulfaradj calls it Nasraneh. The story then goes on to say that this old man made a great appearance of religion, and was constant in fasting and prayer, and in spreading his doctrines, till on meeting with success he chose twelve apostles to preach his religion. The governor of those parts hearing of this imprisoned him, swearing that he would kill him. His maid, or that of the gaoler, having made his keeper drunk, stole the key of the prison from under his pillow and released the sheikh; and the keeper, to avoid the wrath of the governor, gave out that an angel had released him. This story got abroad, and, says Gregory, he made two of his disciples, whom he met at a great distance from the place where he had been imprisoned, to believe that he had been delivered out of prison by angels. He continues, that he wrote a book, of which he gives an extract.† He is said afterwards to have gone to Syria and disappeared there, having converted the ignorant people of those parts.

Now this story, which Gregory Abulfaradj tells of the

* Quoted by Asseman, Bib. Orient. vol. ii. pp. 319, 320. I should say that I have not followed the translation of Asseman word for word, but generally the versions of the same story given in various authors, as by Gregory himself in his dynastic history, written in Arabic. Gregory was Metropolitan of the Jacobites, was born A.D. 1226, and died A.D. 1286.

† See Ansyreeh and Ismaeleeh (p. 284) for translation of story given by Dr. Vandyke (Arabic Geography), who takes Asseman as his chief authority.

founder of the sect of the Ansaireeli in his Syriac Chronicle, and the extract which he gives, are almost identical with the same story and extract given by him in his Arabic history*, but referred by him there to a certain poor man who had come from Khoozistan to Sowad-il-Cufa. This man, he says, was called by the name of the man with whom he used to lodge, which was Carmateyeh, which, when rendered more easy of pronunciation, became Karmatah; and Gregory makes him the founder of the Karamitah or Karmatians.

The same story is told of the founder of the Karmatians by Abulfeda, by Elmakeen (Elmacinus)†, and by Bibars Mansoori. De Sacy says that the stories told by Gregory are evidently the same, in one case related of the founder of the Ansaireeh, and in the other of that of the Karmatians, and both stories are identical with those of Abulfeda and other historians with regard to Karmat, founder of the Karmatians; and the reader will recollect that this is the same story as is told with regard to a man who seems to have been the founder of the Ismaelee sect. On this whole question, De Sacy says:—"We might think that there results from the comparison of the texts of these divers historians, and above all the two texts, Syrian and Arabic, of Abulfaradj, that the Nosairis and the Karmatians are one and the same sect, but I think that this conclusion would be little exact. The Karmatians were divided into various sects; among them are reckoned the Batinech, who gave rise to the Druses. It is probable that the Nosairis, whose teaching has so many relations with that of the Bateins, were a branch of the Karmatians, who had spread into the states of the Fatimite caliphs."‡

In another passage he says:—"I ought not to omit an important observation; it is, that there results from this

* Hist. Dynast. p. 274, 275, ed. Pococke.
† Hist. Saracen. p. 174.
‡ Vol. ii. p. 567.

history [that given above from various authors], that the Karmatians and the Nosairis are the same sect, or rather that the Ismaeleeh, the stock of the Karmatians, are not different from the Nosairis. What the Druse books teach us on the dogmas of the Nosairis, prove that in fact they held a great part of the dogmas of the Ismaeleeh."*

Dr. Vandyke, in his geography, calls the Ansaireeh a branch of the Karmatians, who, he says, took their name from Hamdan son of Karmat; and tells the above story of Nusair in-Namaree, whom he makes to have gone into Syria and preached their doctrines there. Now we have seen that Abu-Shuaib his son was an apostle of this sect, but that he who spread the religion in all lands was Hosein ibn-Hamdan il Khaseebee.

Now this Hamdan, of whom Hosein was the son, can hardly be Hamdan son of Karmat; for when the Ansairee lad read the passage about the Ansairee in Dr. Vandyke's geography alone before an Ansairee sheikh, the sheikh said, "May God curse the son of Karmat and all his sect!" which he would not have dared to say if he had thought Hosein ibn-Hamdan il Khaseebee one of them. For though the Druses curse Id-Darazee, who has given them the name by which they are commonly known, and who was indeed one of their first teachers, yet Hamza, whom they consider next to God, as being the "universal intelligence," speaks in the harshest terms of Id-Darazee, as having been taught by him, and then having, in order to acquire preeminence, been precipitate in openly declaring the deity of Hakem, so as to have brought great danger on the extravagant admirers of Hakem, through a sedition which arose at Cairo in consequence. Hence Id-Darazee finds no place in the hierarchy of the Druses, but is even said to be reviled under the form of a calf.

However, it seems pretty clear that the Ansaireeh were nearly allied to the Karmatians, as these last were to the

* Vol. i. p. 183.

original Ismaeleeh. When, in A.D. 971, Hassan Ala'cem, the grandson of the celebrated Karmatian chief Abu-Said, attacked the Fatimite caliph Moezz, the latter wrote to Hassan saying that, since he made profession of the same doctrines as the Karmatians, they ought to leave him in peace.* Now the Fatimite caliphs were Ismaeleeh, and, even when those Ismaeleeh prepared by their dais had become the sect of Druses, De Sacy says of them, "that they may be but a branch of the sect of the Karmatians;"† and among the Druse writings there is a letter to the people of Abu-Turâb, that is Ali, for so he is called by the Ansaireeh.‡

In like manner the Ansaireeh are allied to the Karmatians. For instance, Karmat is said to have taught his disciples in their prayers fifty prostrations a day, and this is the number, wanting one, which Il Khaseebee ordained, or rather declared to have been ordained, to the Ansaireeh.§ Moreover the Ansaireeh, like the Karmatians, are required to hold a fifth part of their property, every year, at the disposal of their brethren, and to keep the feasts of the Mihrdjan and Niarooz. But while the Ansaireeh are related to the Karmatians and the Ismaeleeh, it appears, from what has been said of the Ansairee sheikh cursing the sect of Ibn-Karmat, that they are not entirely identical with the first named; and, since the Ansaireeh are Imameeh, or followers of the twelve imams, they thus diverge from the Ismaeleeh, who do not continue the line so far, but break it at Ismaeel son of Djaafar-is-Sadik.

Let us now sum up all that has been said about the

* M. C. Defrémeny on Ismaeleeh, Journal Asiatique, ubi supra.

† Vol. i. Introd. p. 34. Moreover, a Druse book speaks of the name of Karmatians being given to the Ismaeleeh. Vol. i. p. 125. Hamza recognises the identity of the Ismaeleeh with the Druses, and calls the Karmatians Unitarians, and their leaders, Abu-Saeed and Abu-Tahir, servants of the true God. Vol. i. p. 240.

‡ MS. p. 117.

§ MS. p. 69.

origin of the sect, and endeavour to fix the approximate time of its commencement.

Gregory Abulfaradj gives it, as we have seen, as A.D. 891, and this is the time mentioned by D'Herbelot as the time of the appearance of Karmat. Since Mohammed the last imam disappeared about A.D. 879, and Hassan il Askeree died some few years before, this is probably sufficiently correct. And as the two sects thus appeared about the same time, and that shortly after the disappearance of the last imam, I suspect that in the outset they preached pretty nearly the same doctrines; but that the Ansaireeh were that part which was for trusting to secret propagandism rather than to open violence, or that Syrian branch which being defeated in A.D. 901 with the loss of its leaders may have subsequently sunk into repose; while the eastern branch, whose seat was in Bahreyn, and whose exploits made famous, or rather infamous, the name of Karmatians, may have gradually diverged from the original tenets of the sect.

Before proceeding with the history of the Ansaireeh, which is henceforward pretty clear, it will be well just to give in a note a table, showing the many changes of government through which Syria has passed since the Mohammedan conquest, the dates of which will serve to fix one's ideas, when following the history of the Ansaireeh.*

* A.D. 633; Mohammedan conquest of Syria.
661, Moawiyah, founder of Omeyades.
750, Abbaside, Caliphs of Bagdad.
969, Fatimite Caliphs of Egypt.
1075, Seljuke-Turks.
1099, Crusaders take Jerusalem.
1187, Saladin takes Jerusalem.
1258, Hulakoo, grandson of Gengis Khan, invades Syria.
Soon after Sultan Beybars of Egypt drives Tartars beyond the Euphrates.
1291, Acre, last possession of Christians, taken by Egyptians.
1401, Tamerlane invades Egypt.
1518, Sultan Selim, the Osmanlee, takes Syria.

On referring back to the chain of tradition, from Hassan il Askeree who became imam in A.D. 868, to Moezz-id-dawlah who entered Bagdad A.D. 945, and remembering that Il Khaseebee is removed equally by two links from Abu-Shuaib ibn-Nusair who learned from the Askeree and Moezz-id-dawlah, we shall find A.D. 900—920, to be about the time when Il Khaseebee, the great apostle who spread the doctrines of the Ansaireeh, disseminated them in Syria; and it is certain from the Druse books to which we have referred, that about A.D. 1020 the Ansaireeh, or Nusaireeh, existed as a sect under that name, and probably, from those same writings and other considerations, in those mountains which are their chief seat to-day, while probably also others of the sect were found in the plains of Mesopotamia. At all events, when the Franks were marching down, in A.D. 1099, to Jerusalem, they found Ansaireeh living in the mountains called by their name. For Gregory Abulfaradj*, who lived only about a century later, says in his Syrian chronicle, speaking of this march: —"The Franks, setting out from the city of Moarra (east of the Ansairee Mountains) into Mount Lebanon, there killed a vast multitude of people of those who are called Nazaræi."

Asseman†, after having mentioned that William of Tyre and Jacobus de Vitriaco speak of the Assassins, adds: —"And that these are the Nazaræi, i. e. Ansaireeh, both the time and the place where they lived, and finally the fact that they affected the name of Christians, seem to convince me." But Asseman, a Maronite Christian of the Lebanon, little removed from our own time, is worthless as an authority on such a point, and it is certain that the Ansaireeh were always quite distinct in name and doctrine from the Ismaeleeh or Assassins. M. Defrémeny, on the authority of Dhéhéby, as we have seen, speaks of the

* Apud Asseman, Bib. Orient., vol. ii. p. 320.
† Ubi supra.

taking of Ansairee castles by the Ismaeleeh in A.D. 1107, or subsequently; and I have already mentioned the general tradition among the Ansaireeh to that effect.* In an Ismaelee book of miracles, ascribed to the famous Ismaelee grand-master Rasheed-ed-deen†, who was such during the latter half of the twelfth century, the title of one of the sections is—"Rasheed-ed-deen confounds two Ansaris who had dared to speak of him with little respect." In fact, the historians Abulfaradj and Abulfeda clearly distinguish between the two sects, who have, as Burckhardt‡ says, always been at enmity, as they were in old time in Wadi Teym, as we have had occasion to mention.

We have seen that the Crusaders had castles in the heart of their country, as Platanos in the district of Muhailby, Merkab, and probably Beni Israeel. The Crusaders and Mussulmans also alternately were in possession of those of Sahyoon, Ish-Shogher, Apamea (Kulat-il-Mudeek), and others east and west of the mountains and on their verge; so that the Ansairee population of the north of the mountains must have been held in entire subjection, while those of the south were equally under the absolute rule of the Assassins in their strong castles of Kadmoos, Masyad, &c., and these last they may have sometimes helped against their common enemies, having more conformity with them than with the Franks or Mussulmans. The fact that the Ansaireeh were a subject people explains why they are so little mentioned in Mussulman and other authors compared with the more powerful Ismaeleeh, or Assassins, with whom it is easy to see that they would be frequently confounded, considering their common origin and place of residence.

Thus they remained subject to the Mussulmans, Crusaders, and Assassins of their neighbourhood, till both the one and the other of these last had surrendered

* So Ismaeleeh to Mr. Walpole.

† Journ. Asiat. Nov.—Dec. 1848.

‡ Travels, p. 152.

all their castles to Beybars, Memlook sultan of Egypt, and his successors, A.D. 1270—85. Then, like their neighbours the Ismaeleeh, they fell under Mussulman rule, under which they have continued to this day.

Ibn-Batoutah the Moghrebbin traveller*, who was in Syria A.D. 1325-50, relates amusingly the way in which the Ansaireeh bore the regulations of their new ruler. Having spoken of Djebileh, he says:—"And the majority of the people of these plains are of the sect of the Nusairech, who believe that Ali the son of Abu-Taleb is God, and they do not pray, nor practise circumcision, nor fast. Now the Malik iz-Zahir (Beybars) forced them to build mosques in their villages, and they built in each village a mosque at a distance from the houses, but they do not enter them, nor repair them, and perhaps their flocks and cattle repair to them, and should, by chance, a stranger come to them, and enter the mosque, and call to prayer, they will say to him, 'Don't bray, your fodder will come to you'; and their number is great." He then goes on to write: "A story. I have been told that an unknown man arose in the country of this sect, and pretended to be the director, and gained many followers. He promised them rule, and divided between them the land of Syria, and used to appoint to them particular parts of the country, commanding them to go forth, and giving to them the leaves of the olive, saying to them, 'By these conquer, for they are to you as authorisations.' When, accordingly, one of them went forth into a country, and the emir of the country summoned him before him, he would say, 'The Imam, the Mohdee (director), has given me this country;' and when the emir would ask, 'Where is your authorisation?' he would take out the olive leaves and be beaten and imprisoned. Then he commanded them to prepare to attack the Mussulmans, and that they should begin with the town of Djebileh, and ordered them to

* Published by the Société Asiatique, Paris, 1853.

take instead of swords sticks of myrtle, promising that they should become swords in their hands at the moment of attack. So they surprised the town of Djebileh while its inhabitants were at the Friday prayers, and entered the houses and ravished the women. Then the Mussulmans rushed out of their mosque, and seizing their swords, slew them as they pleased. When the news reached Ladikeeh, its prince, Behadir Abdullah, came with his troops, and carrier pigeons were sent off to Tripoli, and the emir Il Umara came with his troops, who pursued them till they had killed of them nearly 20,000, and the rest had fortified themselves in the mountains. Then they sent to the emir, and bound themselves to give him a dinar for every poll, if he would spare them. Now the news had already been sent by carrier pigeons to Il Malik in-Nasir (sultan of Egypt, 1310-41), and he replied that they should be put to the sword. But the emir Il Umara laid before him that they were employed by the Mussulmans in tilling the land, and that if they were slain the Mussulmans would be weakened, so he commanded that they should be spared."

Abulfeda likewise speaks of this descent of the Ansaireeh on Djebileh in nearly the same terms, and says that it took place A.H. 717, or A.D. 1317, that is, shortly before Ibn-Batoutah's arrival in the country. He gives the additional information that the man was from the mountains of Belatnus* (which he calls Beladnoos, when he speaks of the taking of the castle from the Franks by Saladin†), that is, from the mountains of Muhailby, just north of the Kelbeeh district, where I reside; Djebileh being on the sea under my house. He says:— "There appeared in the mountains of Belatnus a man of the Nusaireeh, who gave out that he was Mohammed son of Hassan il Askeree, the twelfth of the imams with the Imameeh, who entered the Sirdthah, or cave, of which

* Hist. Musl. vol. v. p. 320. † Vol. iv. p. 89.

mention has been made." He adds that they think that he, Mohammed, still lives, and will return at the end of all things. Abulfeda was prince of Hamah from A.D. 1310—32, and therefore lived at the time of the occurrence which he describes.

From this story it appears clearly that more than 500 years ago the Ansaireeh were in that condition in which they have been found by all subsequent travellers, and in which they are now. In fact the Ansaireeh have a saying among them that whereas God gave to the ancestor of the Mohammedans one thing, and to the Christians another, he gave to their ancestor, Nusair, the ox-goad.

As we have seen that the condition of the Ansaireeh has not altered since the time of Ibn-Batoutah, we need not regret that we cannot fill up the break between his description of them and those of subsequent Frank travellers.

The accurate Maundrell speaks of them in describing his journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem in 1697. He tells an amusing story of his reception at Sholfatia, an Ansairee village in the plain of Ladikeeh, which seems to have been in much the same state as at present. Further on in his narrative he says:—"In that part of the mountains above Jebilee there dwelt a people called by the Turks *Neceres*, of a very strange and singular character, for it is their principle to adhere to no certain religion, but, chamelion like, to put on the colour of religion, whatever it be, which is reflected upon them from the persons with whom they happen to converse. With Christians they profess themselves Christians; with Turks they are good Mussulmans, with Jews they pass for Jews, being such Proteuses in religion that nobody was ever able to discover what shape or standard their consciences are surely of; all that is certain concerning them is, that they make very much and good wine, and are great drinkers."

His description of their duplicity in religion would do for the present day, but the vineyards have been destroyed since his time, and no wine or next to none is now made.

The Jesuit missionaries mention the Ansaireeh. They write*:—"At the present day we are not acquainted here with any people bearing the name of Assassins; yet it is possible that the Kesbins [they mean the Kelbeeh], a nation which inhabits the mountain two days distant from Tripoli, and the *Nassariens*, another nation which is established in the plain toward the sea, may be the successors of the Assassins. These two nations inhabit the same country, and, what is more, there is much resemblance between the religion which the Assassins professed and that professed in the present day by the Kesbins and Nassariens.

"These two nations, the Kesbins and the Nassariens, ought to be considered as making one and the same nation. They have different names from the different countries which they inhabit. Those among them who inhabit the mountains are called Kesbins, because their country is called Kesbiè: the others who occupy the plains are called Nassariens, that is to say bad Christians; a character which belongs to them, for they have made themselves a religion which is a monstrous compound of Mohammedanism and Christianity, and which gives them an extravagant idea of our holy mysteries."

They then go on to describe their religion, but we will leave what they say on this point to a future chapter.

They conclude: "They are strongly attached to their customs, persuaded as they are that their religion is no less good than that of the Maronites [the Christians of the Lebanon, who are members of the church of Lebanon, which is connected with the Church of Rome], because they have some practices in common.

* Lettres Édifiantes et Curieuses. See Jowett's Christian Researches, p. 52, &c.

"Several of our missionaries have used their utmost efforts to gain some of them; but as they obstinately hear only their own wicked doctors, and will follow no other opinions than those in which they were brought up, our missionaries, despairing of their conversion, have been obliged often to shake off the dust of their feet against them."

Richard Pococke, who travelled in Syria in 1738, says: "The Noceres who live north-east of Latichea are spoken of by many: their religion seems to be some remains of Paganism; they are much despised by the Turks, and they seem rather fond of Christians."*

Niebuhr, who travelled in Syria in 1761, and obtained an Ansairee book, says of them:—"One of their Mekuddams lives at Bahlulie, not far from Ladakia, and he is the most powerful of the Nassairiens. There are likewise Mekuddams at Sumrin, in the country of Khawaby [Chouabe, as he writes it], and in the district of Safeta, and another of their sheikhs leases a part of Djebel Kelbie. They all pay tribute to the Pacha of Tripoli;" for Ladikeeh was formerly governed from Tripoli. "Their districts are lucrative enough, for they furnish the chief part of that excellent tobacco which is exported from Ladakia. But this nation is not nearly so numerous as that of the Druses. It does not inhabit such high mountains, and therefore is more under subjection to the Turks." He is right in this last remark, but wrong in the previous one, for the Ansaireeh are twice as numerous as the Druses.

Volney gives an account of the same people in his book of travels† (he was in Syria 1783–5):—"The Ansaria," he says, "are divided into several tribes or sects; among which are distinguished the Shamsia, or adorers of the sun; the Kelbia, or worshippers of the dog" (a ridiculous statement, which by the by does not say much for

* Travels in Egypt and Syria, vol. ii. p. 208.
† Vol. ii. p. 6.

his accuracy), "and the Kadmousia," which last are not Ansaireeh but Ismaeleeh.

Burckhardt, in describing his journey from Aleppo to Damascus in 1812 *, speaks of passing the Ansairee village of Busseen, in the plains of Hamah, on his way from that place to Masyad. He afterwards spent a night at the Ansairee village of Shennyn, on his way south, along the east of the Ansairee mountains. He takes occasion to speak of the Ansaireeh, and makes a little confusion in names. He says:—"They (the *Ansari*) are divided into different sects of which nothing is known but the names, viz. Kelbye, Shemsye, and Mokladye."

Thus we have come down to our own times, when, before myself, the late Dr. Eli Smith and the Hon. F. Walpole penetrated into the Ansairee mountains, the former passing quickly through, the latter making a rather longer stay. Recently the American Presbyterian missionary, the Rev. Mr. Dodds (who, with his colleague, the Rev. Mr. Beattie, has just established himself in Ladikeeh), has visited part of the mountains.

* Travels in Syria, p. 156.

CHAP. IV.

RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF THE SECRET HERETICAL SECTS OF ISLAM.

BEFORE entering on the description of the religion of the Ansaireeh, we will give a sketch of that of those secret heretical sects of Mohammedanism, which are allied to them. By doing so, we shall more fully redeem the promise of our titlepage, the illustration of what has been called the "great Asian mystery," which has its counterpart and representative in the childish mystery of our day, Freemasonry.

We have already said that these sects had their origin in political as well as in religious considerations. The endeavour to secure the Caliphate for Ali and his descendants was based on his asserted right to the Imamate, and the weaker the hope of obtaining the former, the more determined the maintenance of the latter.

But these considerations were not the only ones which led to the corruption of Islam, by the extravagant honour paid to Ali and his house; the Mohammedan faith received equal injury from its contact with the Magians of Persia; "who," says an Arab author professing to draw his materials from books not readily to be found, "as they could not conquer the Arabs, corrupted Mohammedanism." *

"Scarcely," says De Sacy, "had Islamism thrown out some roots in the places formerly subject to the empire of the Sassanides and the religion of the Magians, than a

* Safeenet-ir-Raghib, (Boulak, Cairo,) p. 216.

schism political and religious lit up there the torch of fanaticism." *

"When the faith of Islam was forced upon the Persian nation by the sanguinary Omar, it was declared by the conqueror, that all who did not receive it with implicit obedience should be put to the sword. Such a summary process of conversion left the real tenets of the great majority of the nation unaltered; from old associations, they began to regard the Imams, or chiefs of the faith, as Bodhisatwas; and, as we shall have occasion to notice hereafter, his principle pervades all the Schiite sects; the chief difference between them being as to the number of incarnations. The Schiite notion of an Imam is precisely the same as that which the Tibetians form of their Grand Lama, and the Burmese of their Bodhisatwas." †

So De Sacy:—"The dogma of the union of the divinity to Ali and the Imams of his race owed, if I am not mistaken, its origin to the ancient system of the Parsees. It is also to the ancient theology of the people of Eastern Asia that we must refer the origin of the transmigration of souls, and perhaps the study of the books of the Grecian philosophers contributed to strengthen and extend this opinion among the Mussulmans." ‡

It is necessary to observe that not only was contact with the Magians easy, especially in the frontier provinces of Persia, but they as well as the Sabians (who also contributed to form the heterogeneous system of the heretical sects) had been driven into the Arab province of Bahreyn by Alexander the Great. And in explanation of the closing words of De Sacy, in the above quotation, I will give those of Makrisi §:—'Mamoon, son of Haroon-ir-Rasheed, being very fond of the sciences of the ancients, sent men into the country of the Greeks, who translated for him into

* De Sacy, Religion of Druses, Introd. p. 27.
† Taylor, p. 152. ‡ De Sacy, Introd. p. 31.
§ Description of Egypt, vol. ii. p. 258: ed. Cairo.

Arabic the books of the philosophers, and brought them to him about A. H. 210 (A. D. 825); so that the sects of philosophers and their books were spread everywhere. The Karmatians and others studied them eagerly, and thus came on the Mussulmans, from the teaching of the philosophers, innumerable ills. All the sects of the Rafedhis, which were spread everywhere, studied philosophy and took that part of it which they chose."

I have before said that, even in the time of Ali, Abdullah ibn-Saba and others taught that a particle of the Divinity resided in him. So also Il Mokannaa, in the time of the Abbaside caliph Al Mohdi, "spoke of the transmigration of souls,"* and "joined to it the incarnation of the divine nature, a dogma originating in India, and afterwards adopted by the Ghullat [extravagant followers of Ali] as one of their principal tenets."†

It is well just to pause and explain this doctrine of Ilhulool, i. e. descent of the Divinity into a human form, rather than its *incarnation* or taking of human flesh, for the former seems to be the doctrine of the Ansaireeh; and we ask for the attention of the reader, as we shall have again to refer to what is now said.

"The Sabians," says Shahrestani ‡, "say of God, that he is one in his essence, but multiple, because he multiplies himself in persons before the eyes of men. These bodies or persons are the seven planets which govern the world, and those good terrestrial objects in which God descends without ceasing to be one. There is, also, *a descent of His essence*, or *a descent of the whole deity*, and *a partial descent*, or *a descent of a portion of His essence*, which takes place according to the degree of preparedness of the person."

The only possible way in which the heretical sects could maintain any connexion with Mohammedanism,

* Abulfaradj, Hist. Dynast. (ed. Pocockii,) p. 225.

† Von Hammer, Assassins, p. 27.

‡ Quoted by De Sacy, Introd. p. 36.

was by allegorising the Koran, and teaching an inner or esoteric meaning, *Il-Batin*, in opposition to, and to the entire subversion of, the outer or apparent meaning, *Iz-Zahir*. Mohammed son of Ismaeel, and grandson of the imam Djaafar-is-Sadik, is sometimes said to have been the author of this allegorisation, which he may have learned from his grandfather. This allegorisation, or interpretation, is called Taweel, in contradistinction to Tanzeel, descent, which is used for the literal interpretation of the words of the Koran, as they were sent down to Mohammed. The Taweel opened a wide door to all kinds of heresy, and led, as Mussulman authors complain, to an entire explaining away of the positive precepts of Islam. Those that pretended to this Ulm ul Batin, or knowledge of the inner meaning of the Koran, were called Batineel, which name embraced a wide circle of sects; and they are said to have based their system on the "words of the Most High, where he says, 'A wall was thrown between them, which had a door, on its inner side (Batin) mercy, and on its outer (Zahir) torment.'"*

On the failure of the rebellion of Il Mokannaa and Baber, Abdullah son of Maimoon Kaddah founded, as we have seen, a sect called the Ismaeleeh, from Ismaeel the son of Djaafar-is-Sadik, whose name he made use of to give authority to his system. His object was to gain political power, and to effect that by secret propagandism which had not succeeded by open violence. "Similar attempts have been made in different ages of the world: the colleges of the Indian and Egyptian priests, the association of the Magi, which more than once shook the throne of Persia, the secret societies of the Pythagoreans in Southern Italy and Sicily, the Bacchanalians of which Livy gives such a singular description, the Templars in the middle ages, and the Jesuits in our own, are all examples

* Safeenet-ir-Raghib, p. 216.

of secret societies formed under the pretext of religion, but really aiming at the establishment of their order in the plenitude of political power." *

Abdullah son of Maimoon divided his system "into seven degrees, after the fashion of the Pythagorean and Indian philosophers," into which his disciples were initiated gradually. "The last degree inculcated the vanity of all religion, — the indifference of actions, which, according to him, are neither visited with recompense nor chastisement, either now or hereafter. This alone was the path of truth and right, all the rest imposture and error. He appointed emissaries, whom he dispatched to enlist disciples, and to initiate them, according to their capacity for libertinism and turbulence, in some or all of the degrees. The pretensions of the descendants of Mohammed the son of Ismail served him as a political mask: these his missionaries asserted as partisans, while they were secretly but the apostles of crime and impiety." †

These degrees were afterwards increased to nine, by the western Ismaeleeh, in the time of the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt, and as they became then more known, and are described by Makrisi the great historian, I will give them as they were taught in their lodge at Cairo: — "This account which Makrisi has preserved, concerning the promulgation of these degrees of initiation, forms a very precious and the most ancient document on the history of the secret societies of the East, in whose steps those of the West afterwards trod." ‡

"The first degree § was the longest and most difficult of all, as it was necessary to inspire the pupil with the most implicit confidence in the knowledge of his teacher, and to incline him to take that most solemn oath, by which he bound himself to the secret doctrine with blind

* Taylor, p. 172. † Von Hammer, p. 29. ‡ Ibid. p. 33.
§ I have followed Von Hammer, p. 34, Wood's translation, in this account of the degrees of initiation.

faith and unconditional obedience. For this purpose every possible expedient was adopted to perplex the mind by the many contradictions of positive religion and reason, to render the absurdities of the Koran still more involved by the most insidious questions * and most subtle doubts, and to point from the apparent literal signification to a deeper sense, which was properly the kernel, as the former was but the husk. The more ardent the curiosity of the novice, the more resolute was the refusal of the master to afford the least solution to these difficulties, until he had taken the most unrestricted oath; on this he was admitted to the second degree. This inculcated the recognition of divinely appointed imams, who were the source of all knowledge. As soon as the faith in them was well established, the third degree taught their number, which could not exceed the holy seven; for, as God had created seven heavens, seven earths, seven seas, seven planets, seven colours, seven musical sounds, and seven metals, so had he appointed seven of the most excellent of his creatures as revealed imams: these were Ali, Hassan, Hosein, Ali Zeyn-il-Aabideen, Mohammed-ul-Bahir, Djaafar-is-Sadik, and Ismael his son, as the last and seventh. The fourth grade was, that since the beginning of the world there had been seven divine lawgivers, or speaking apostles of God, of whom each had always, by the command of heaven, altered the doctrine of his predecessor; that each of these had seven coadjutors, who succeeded each other in the epoch from one speaking lawgiver to another, but who, as they did not appear manifestly, were called the mutes (Samit). The first of these mutes was named Sas, Asâs, or foundation, 'the seat as it were of the ministers of the speaking prophet,' Nâtik. 'These seven speaking prophets, with their seven' Asâs, 'were Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, and Ismaeel the son of Djaafar, who, as the last, was called Sahib-ez-

* See De Sacy's Introd.

Zeman, the lord of the time, and Kaim-iz-Zeman, or chief of the age. Their seven assistants were Seth, Shem, Ishmael son of Abraham, Aaron and afterwards Joshua, 'Simeon' or Simon Peter, Ali, and Mohammed son of Ismaeel. It is evident from this dexterous arrangement, which gained the Ismaeleeh the name of Seveners, that as they named only the first of the mute divine envoys in each prophetic period, and since Mohammed the son of Ismaeel had been dead only a hundred years, the teachers were at full liberty to present to those whose progress stopped at this degree whomsoever they pleased as one of the mute prophets of the current age. The fifth degree must necessarily render the credibility of the doctrine more manifest to the minds of the hearers. For this reason it taught that each of the seven mute prophets had twelve apostles for the extension of the true faith; for the number twelve is the most excellent after seven: hence the twelve signs of the zodiac, the twelve months, the twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve bones of the fingers of each hand, the thumb excepted, and so on.

"After these five degrees, the precepts of Islamism were examined; and in the sixth it was shown that all positive legislation must be subordinate to the general and philosophical. The dogmas of Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras were adduced as proofs, and laid down as axioms. This degree was very tedious, and only when the acolyte was fully penetrated with the wisdom of the philosophers was admission granted him to the seventh, where he passed from philosophy to mysticism. This was the Oriental mystic theology, and the doctrine of unity which the Soopees have exhibited in their works. In the eighth, the positive precepts of religion were again brought forward to fall to dust by all that preceded; then was the pupil fully enlightened as to the superfluity of all apostles and prophets, the non-existence of heaven and hell, the indifference of all actions, for which there is neither reward nor punishment, either in this world or

the next; and thus was he matured for the ninth and last degree, to become the blind instrument of all the passions of unbridled thirst of power. To believe nothing, and to dare all, formed, in two words, the sum of this system, which annihilated every principle of religion and morality, and had no other object than to execute ambitious designs with suitable ministers, who, daring all and honouring nothing, since they consider everything a cheat and nothing forbidden, are the best tools of an infernal policy."

The Keramitah, or Karmatians, were, as we have seen, a branch of the early Ismaeleeh. D'Herbelot * says of the founder, that he taught his disciples to make fifty prayers a day, and allowed them to eat things forbidden by Mussulmans. He allegorised the precepts of the Koran, giving out prayer to be the symbol of obedience to the imam; fasting to be merely the symbol of silence and secrecy with respect to strangers who were not of their sect; and that fidelity to the imam was figured by the precept which forbids fornication, so that those who reveal the precepts of their religion, and who do not obey their Sheikh blindly, fell into the crime called "zinah." Instead of the tenth part of their property which Mussulmans gave to the poor, *they were to set apart the fifth part for the Imam.*

Von Hammer † speaks in a similar way of Karmat. "His doctrine, in addition to the circumstance of its forbidding nothing, and declaring every thing allowable and indifferent, meriting neither reward nor punishment, undermined more particularly the basis of Mohammedanism, by declaring that all its commands were allegorical, and merely a disguise of political precepts and maxims. Moreover, all was to be referred to the blameless and irreproachable Imam Maasoom (preserved from error), as the model of a prince, whom, although he had occupied

* Article on Carmatians, Bib. Orient. † P. 29, 30.

no existing throne, they pretended to seek, and declared war against bad and good princes, without distinction, in order that, under the pretext of contending for a better, they might be able to unravel at once the thickly interwoven web of religion and government. The injunction of prayer meant nothing but obedience to the Imaïm Maasoom; alms, the tithes to be given to him; fasting, the preservation of the political secret regarding the imam of the family of Ismaeel. Every thing depended on the interpretation, Taweel, without which the whole word of the Koran, Tanzeel, had neither meaning nor value. Religion did not consist in external observances, Iz-zahir, but in the internal feeling, Il-Batin." Ibn-Atheer, who lived between about A.D. 1159—1231 according to Nowairi, gives an account of a book of the Karmatians. So do Bibars Mansoori and Abulfeda, who take their narration, for certain, thinks De Sacy, from Ibn-Atheer. Gregory Abulfaradj also speaks of this book in his Arabic history, ascribing it to Karmat, though in his Syriac Chronicle he ascribes it to the founder of the sect of the Nusaireeh.

The extract which these historians give from the book is as follows: — "In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Says Il-Faradj, son of Othman, of the village of Nusrana, that there appeared to him in human form the Messiah, who is the Word of God, who is the Guide, and he is Ahmed, son of Mohammed, son of Hanafeyah, of the sons of Ali, and he is also Gabriel the angel, and he said to him, thou art the leader; thou art the true one; thou are the camel that keepest wrath against the infidels; thou art the ox that bearest the sins of the true believers; thou art the spirit; thou art John, son of Zachariah."

This, with variations, is the extract given by the various historians, but De Sacy with justice questions its having been taken, at least in the form given above, from any book of the Karmatians, for they certainly did not re-

cognise the imamate of Mohammed, son of that wife of Ali called Hanafeyah, but that of the descendants of his wife Fatima. Moreover, says De Sacy, the name of Il-Faradj, son of Othman, does not appear in any book of the Ismaeleeh.* It is said also that Karmat taught his disciples to make four inclinations; two before sunrise, and two before sunset, or, according to Bibars Mansoori, two after sunset. The following words are also ascribed to him. First quoting a passage from the Koran (Soorah ii. verse 185), "They will ask you of the new moons; say that they are the epochs fixed for men," he thus allegorises it: "In the exterior sense it refers to years, chronology, months, and days; but in the inner sense it refers to my faithful friends who have made known my ways to my servants." Among other things he commanded a fast two days in the year, at the feasts of *Mihrdjan* and of *Nurooz;* he forbade the wine of the palm tree, and permitted the use of that made from the grape; he prescribed the abstaining from the complete ablution according to the rite called Gosl, for a pollution; and directed the being contented with the ablution called Wudoo†, as it is practised before prayer. He allowed the killing all that should take arms against him; but forbade the eating any animal with tusks or claws.‡

About the time that the sect of the Ansaireeh arose, arose also that of the Ishakeeh, who are spoken of in conjunction with them by Shahrestani and Niaracci.§ We have seen that Ishak, the founder of this sect, is considered the great enemy of the Ansaireeh, for having "wished to kill" Abu-Shuaib ibn-Nusair, their first apostle. Niaracci makes them hold pretty well the same tenets as the Nusaireeh; and probably they hated one another with that

* Vol. i. p. 177, note. † Taylor, p. 121.

‡ De Sacy, p. 178, and Gregory Abulfaradj, Hist. Dynast. p. 275, 276.

§ Prodromus to Koran, part iii. p. 84.

odium theologicum which is always the fiercer in proportion to the nearness in opinion of those who indulge in it. He says, under the eleventh head of sects: "The Ishakeeh and Nusaireeh. These assert that the appearance of a spirit with a material body cannot be denied, since Gabriel appeared in the figure of a man, and Satan in the figure of an animal; and so, say they, God appeared in the form of Ali, and of his children, and spoke by their tongue, and handled with their hands."

Macrisi alludes to the Ishakeeh, "who say that prayer is not lawful except after the imam." *

We now come to that offshoot of the Western Ismaeleeh, the Druses.

Hakem, the Deity in human form of the Druse sect, was sultan of Egypt towards the end of the tenth century. It was towards the close of his life, which had been characterised by every absurdity, that some of the sect of the Ismaeleeh began to ascribe to him divine honours. He himself during his life had shown himself a partisan of the sect, and among other ordinances forbade the selling of *fish without scales, raisins, &c.* Il Darazi, who was a convert of Hamza, published a book in which he styled himself "the sword of the age," and ascribed divine power to Hakem, teaching that the soul of Adam had passed through Ali and then to Hakem. On reading this book in a mosque at Cairo, a sedition was raised, from which he escaped to Syria; where, after preaching his doctrine for a few years, he is said to have been killed in a fight with the Tartars.

Hamza, the great founder of the Druse religion, is said by De Sacy to call him more than once in his works, "calf," "pig," &c. As Abdullah, son of Maimoon the founder of the Ismaeleeh, came from the Klazistan, the frontier province of Persia, and Hassan son of Sabah, founder of the Assassins, from another Persian province, Khorassan, so also Il Darazi, and Hamza the son of Ali, the founders of the Druse sect, were Persians.

* Description of Egypt, vol. ii. p. 354.

The following is the system of the Druses. Hakem appeared ten times, in all, under human form; the first time under the name of Al-bâr, and in the last and most perfect manifestation under that of Hakem.

The human figures under which the Deity appeared are called "Appearance," "Statim," "Envelope," or *Kamees*, a word which is now used for a shirt.

The Druses call Mohammed son of Ismaeel the seventh Natih, or speaking prophet and legislator, and make him the author of the Taweel and Batin, or the system of allegorisation and of the inner meaning of the Koran. From Ismaeel to Abdullah, the father of Said or Obeidallah, the founder of the Fatimite caliphs of the West, they reckon seven concealed imams.

In the formulary of the Druses it is said that Hamza had before appeared seven times in the world, though De Sacy doubts whether this was the original teaching of the Druses, since he does not find the number of appearances given in the ancient writings.

These appearances were—

In the time of	Adam	as	Shatnil, or Adam-is-Safa.
„	Noah	„	Pythagoras.
„	Abraham	„	David.
„	Moses	„	Schoaib (Jethro).
„	Jesus	„	Eleazar (the true Messiah).
„	Mahomet	„	*Sahrian-il-Faresi.*
„	Said (Obeidallah)	„	Saleh.

De Sacy gives* the following clear summary of the statements in the Druse writings with respect to the person of Hakem; and I must again bespeak the reader's special attention, as what he says, *mutatis mutandis*, is pretty well applicable to the opinion of the Ansaireeh with respect to Ali.

"There results, it seems to me, from these statements, that the divine humanity of the Deity was one and always the same in his different manifestations, although he ap-

* Vol. i. p. 66.

peared under different forms; that the Deity and the human form, which serves him as a veil, are so united, that the actions and words of this form are truly the actions and words of the Deity; that the merit of faith consists in believing that the Deity, in rendering himself accessible to sense by the form which serves him as a veil, does not cease to be infinite, incomprehensible, inaccessible to the senses. First, that notwithstanding the diversity and the succession of his manifestations, there is nevertheless, in respect of him, neither succession of time nor any numbers; that the divine humanity of the Deity is antecedent to all created things, and is the prototype of the human form; that the manner in which men see him in the figure with which he clothes himself is proportioned to the degree of purity in each; that it was necessary that divinity should thus manifest itself under a human form, that men might be able to acquire a full conviction of his existence, and that the divine justice might recompense those who should have believed, and punish those who should have been incredulous; and lastly, that the last manifestation under the name of Hakem is the most perfect, that of which all the preceding manifestations were in some sort but the daybreak and sketch."

Hamza established a carefully devised hierarchy, as the beings intervening between Hakem and the common herd of believers, and as the teachers of his new sect. The ministers are divided into two classes of five superior and others inferior.

The superior are the following:—

I. Hamza, styled "the universal intelligence" (Akl); the "will" (iràdel, volonté); "the cause of causes;" "the chief of the age;" "the imam;" "the door;" "the command."

Hamza was next to Hakem, and not far removed from him in honour and respect, for he existed from the beginning, and by him were all things created. He is far superior to those who came next.

II. Ismaeel. "The universal soul" (Nafr); "the wish" (Masheyah, vouloir); "the demonstration of the time;" "the missionary of the imam;" "Dthoo Massa," one that sucks, as it were, instruction from another. He is nearest to Hamza, and bears the same relation to him that woman does to man.

III. Mohammed, son of Wahab. "The word."

IV. Abu-il-Khair Sclama. "The great door." "The right wing."

V. Baha-ed-deen. "The successor." "The left wing."

Then come the inferior ministers, "the application," "the opening," "the appearance," the Dais (missionaries), Madhoons (permitted), and Mocassers (breakers).

Many of these names are traditional ones in the Ismaeleeh sects, and the Ansaireeh, for instance, make use of several of them.

The Druses believe that all souls were created from the light of the "universal intelligence," and that having been created all at one time, their number remains always the same.

They believe in transmigration, but it appears from the Druse book against the Ansaireeh, that they did not, in Hamza's time, believe in transmigration into animals, as the Ansaireeh do.

They call the body "kamees," or envelope, as do the Ansaireeh.

The punishment of a man is to fall from a higher to a lower rank as regards religion.

De Sacy thinks they believe that when souls arrive at perfection they cease to transmigrate, and are united with the imam. In this last age, the epoch of Hakem and Hamza, perfect souls remain concealed in Hamza till he shall return in glory, when they will appear in his train.

The Druses look on the last judgment only as the time when the "Unitarian" doctrine will be publicly manifested, and when the fate of the faithful and of infidels

will be finally fixed. The name they give to themselves is that of Muwahhedeen, or Unitarians.

With respect to the positive precepts of Islam, Hamza says of prayer: — "You have heard in the Madjlisses (sittings of the lodge of the Ismaelech in Cairo), that the 'interior' of this precept is the accustomed engagement, and that it is called Salât, because it is the Silat which joins the faithful to the imam, that is, Ali son of Abu-Taleb. But our Lord (Hakem) has himself abrogated this inner meaning, and we learn that prayer is to attach our hearts to the dogma of the unity of our Lord by the ministry of the five ministers.

"Then comes the tithe from which our Lord has entirely discharged you. You have heard say in the Madjlisses of the doctrine of the Batineeh, that the payment of tithes consists in recognising the sovereign power of Ali son of Abu-Taleb, and of the imam of his race, and of renouncing all connexion with his enemies, Abu-Becr, Omar, and Othman. We see clearly that our Lord has abolished the interior of the precept of tithes, which has for object Ali son of Abu-Taleb, just as he has abrogated the exterior.

"With respect to the inner sense of the precept of fasting, the sheikhs say that it is silence (on the dogmas of their sect). We see that our Lord has delivered men from the inner and outer precept of fasting. The precept signifies, in truth, the keeping your hearts in the faith of the unity of our Lord.

"As to the inner part of the precept of pilgrimage, the sheikhs who profess the inner doctrine have said that the Haram (Caabah or temple of Mecca) is the sect of the Bateneeh. But our Lord has abrogated both the outer and the inner meanings," &c.

The Druses enjoin in their writings veracity, mutual assistance and protection, that is to their "brethren" and "sisters" (for the Druses admit women among the initiated), and alms to the Okhâl, or initiated. Let it be remembered that it is only to "brethren," the members of

their Freemasonry, that these good qualities are recommended, and not to outsiders.

The Druses do not initiate even all those of their own sect. Very many are left without any religious teaching, who are distinguished from the Okhâl, by the title of Djuhhâl, or ignorant; in fact these last form the majority. The Druses have watchwords, by which they recognise one another.

I have been thus particular with respect to the constitution of the Druse sect, because I shall have to institute some comparison between them and the Ansaireeh, and I have followed De Sacy in nearly all that I have said.

We now pass on to the system of the Eastern Ismaeleeh, or Assassins, founded by Hassan son of Sabâh, a Persian of Khorassan. Von Hammer, in his history of the order, has given an account of the changes by which Hassan adapted the doctrines and system of the Ismaeleeh to his purpose.

"Hitherto," says he *, "the Ismaeleeh had only Masters and Fellows; namely, the Dais or emissaries, who, being initiated into all the grades of the secret doctrine, enlisted proselytes; and the Rafeeks (companions), who, being gradually intrusted with its principles, formed the great majority. It was manifest to the practical and enterprising spirit of Hassan, that in order to execute great undertakings with security and energy a third class would also be requisite, who, never being admitted to the mystery of atheism and immorality, which snaps the bond of all subordination, were but blind and fanatical tools in the hands of their superiors; that a well organised political body needs not merely heads but also arms; and that the Master required not only intelligent and skilful Fellows, but also faithful and active agents; these agents were called Fedaweeh (i. e. the self-offering or devoted), and the name itself declares their destination. They were

* P. 55 et seq. Wood's translation.

clothed in white, with red turbans, boots, or girdles. Habited in the hues of innocence and blood, armed with daggers which they continually drew in the service of the Grand-Master, they formed his guard, the executioners of his deadly orders, the sanguinary tools of the ambition and revenge of this order of Assassins.

"The Grand-Master was called Seyyidna, our Lord, and commonly Sheikh-ul-Djehd, the old man or supreme master of the mountain, because the order always possessed themselves of the castles in mountainous regions. He was neither king nor prince in the usual sense of the word, and never assumed the title either of Sultan, Malik, or Emeer, but merely that of Sheikh, which to this day the heads of the Arab tribes and the superiors of the religious orders of the Srofees and dervishes bear. His authority could be over no kingdom nor principality, but over a brotherhood or order; European writers, therefore, fall into a great mistake in confounding the empire of the Assassins with hereditary dynasties, since in the form of its institution it was only an order like that of the Knights of St. John, the Teutonic Knights, or the Templars. The latter of these, besides having a grand-master, grand-priors and religious nuncios, had also some resemblance to the Assassins in their spirit of political interference and secret doctrine. Dressed in white with the distinctive mark of the red cross on their mantles, as were the Assassins in red girdles and caps, the Templars had also secret tenets, which denied and abjured the sanctity of the cross, as the others did the commandments of Islamism. The fundamental maxim of the policy of both was to obtain possession of the castles and strong places of the adjacent country; and thus, without pecuniary or military means, to maintain an *imperium in imperio*, keeping the nations in subjection, as dangerous rivals to princes.

"The flat part of a country is always commanded by the more mountainous, and the latter by the fortresses scattered through it. To become masters of these by strata-

gem or force, to awe princes either by fraud or fear, and to use the murderer's arm against the enemies of the order, were the political maxims of the Assassins. Their internal safety was secured by the strict observance of religious ordinances; their external, by fortresses and the poniard. From the proper subjects of the order, or the profane, was only expected the fulfilment of the duties of Islamism, even of the most austere, such as refraining from wine and music; from the devoted satellites was demanded blind subjection, and the faithful use of their daggers. The emissaries or initiated worked with their heads, and led the "arms" in execution of the orders of the Sheikh, who, in the centre of his sovereignty, directed, like an animating soul, their hearts and poniards to the accomplishment of his ambitious projects.

"Immediately under the Grand-Master stood the Dai-il-Kebeer, grand-recruiters, or grand-priors, his lieutenants in the three provinces to which the power of the order extended, namely, Gebal, Kuhistan, and Syria. Beneath these were the Dais, or religious nuncios and political emissaries in ordinary, as initiated masters. The Fellows (Rafeek) were those who were advancing to the mastership, through the several grades of initiation into the secret doctrine. The guards of the order, the warriors, were the devoted murderers, Fedaweeh; and the aspirants (Lasik) seem to have been the novices or lay brethren. Besides this sevenfold gradation from Sheikh, grand-master; Dai-il-Kebeer, grand-prior; Dai, master; Rafeeks, fellows; Fedaweeh, agents; Lasiks, lay brothers; down to the profane or the people; there was also another sevenfold gradation of the spiritual hierarchy, who applied themselves exclusively to the before-mentioned doctrine of the Ismaeleeh concerning the seven speaking and seven mute imams, and belonged more properly to the theoretical framework of the schism, than to the destruction of political powers. According to this arrangement, there live, in every generation, seven persons

distinguished from each other by their different grades of rank: 1st, the divinely appointed Imam; 2nd, the proof, Hudjjah, designated by hiin, which the Ismaeleeh call Asâs, or foundation; 3rd, the Dthoo Massah, who received instruction from the Hudjjah, as he did from the Imam; 4th, the Missionaries, or Dais; 5th, the Madthomeem, or permitted, who were admitted to the solemn promise or oath (Ahd); 6th, the Umhellabeeh, or dog-like, who sought out subjects fit for conversion for the missionaries, as hounds run down the game for the huntsman; 7th, the Moomeneen the believers, the people. On comparing these two divisions we find that in the first the invisible Imam, in whose name the Sheikh claimed the obedience of the people, and in the second the guards, of which he made use against the foes of the order, are wanting; but that, in other respects, the different grades coincide. The proof was the Grand-Master; the Dthoo Massah, the grand-prior; the Fellows were the Madthomeem; and the dog-like, the lay brethren. The fourth and seventh, that is the preachers of the faith and the believers, the cheating missionaries and the duped people, are the same in both.

"We have seen above that the first founder of secret societies in the heart of Islam, Abdullah the son of Maimoon Haddal, established seven degrees of his doctrine, for which reason, as well as for their opinions concerning the seven imams, his disciples obtained the by-name of Seveners. This appellation, which had been assigned hitherto to the Western Ismaeleeh, although they had increased the number of grades from seven to nine, was with greater justice transferred to this new branch, the Eastern Ismaeleeh or Assassins, whose founder, Hassan, not only restored the grades to their original number, seven, but also sketched out for the dais, or missionaries, a particular rule of conduct, consisting of seven points, which had reference, not so much to the gradual enlightenment of those who were to be taught, as to the necessary

qualifications of the teachers; and was the proper rubric of the order.

"The introductory rule was called Ashinai, risk (knowledge of the calling), and comprised the maxims of the knowledge of mankind, necessary to the selection of subjects suited to the initiated. Several proverbs much in vogue among the Dais had relation to this. They contained a sense different from their literal meaning: 'Sow not in barren soil;' 'Speak not in a house where there is a lamp;' implied, 'Waste not your words on the incapable;' 'Venture not to speak them in the presence of a lawyer:' for it is equally dangerous to engage with blockheads as with men of tried knowledge and probity, because the former misunderstand, and the latter unmask, the doctrine, and neither would be available either as teachers or instruments. These allegorical sentences, and the prudential rules so necessary to avoid all chance of discovery, remind us of a secret society of high antiquity, and a celebrated order of modern times; in short, of Pythagoras and the Jesuits. The mysterious adages of the former which have come down to us, and whose peculiar sense is now unintelligible, were probably nothing more than similar maxims to the initiated in his doctrine; and political prudence in the selection of subjects fit for the different designs of a society reached the highest perfection in that of Jesus. Thus the Pythagoreans and the Jesuits have a resemblance to the Assassins.

"The second rule of conduct was called Tanees (gaining confidence); and taught them to gain over candidates by flattering their inclinations and passions. As soon as they were won, it was requisite, in the third place, to involve them, by a thousand doubts and questions concerning the positive religious commands and absurdities of the Koran, in a maze of scruples which were not to be resolved, and of uncertainty which was not to be disentangled.

"In the fourth place followed the oath (Ahd), by which the acolyte bound himself, in the most solemn manner, to

inviolable silence and submission; that he would impart his doubts to none but his superior; that he would blindly obey him and none but him. In the fifth rule, Tadlees, the candidates were taught how their doctrine and opinions agreed with those of the greatest men in Church and State. This was done the more to attract and fire them by the examples of the great and powerful. The sixth, Tasees (confirmation), merely recapitulated all that had preceded, in order to confirm and strengthen the learner's faith. After this followed, in the seventh place, the Taweel, or allegorical interpretation, which was the conclusion of the course of atheistical instruction. In Taweel the allegorical interpretation, in opposition to Tanzeel or the literal sense of the divine word, was the principal essence of the secret doctrines, from which they were named Batineel, Esoterics, to distinguish them from the Zahireel, or followers of the outward worship. By means of this crafty system of exposition and interpretation, which in our own days has often been applied to the Bible, articles of faith and duty became mere allegories, the external form merely contingent, the inner sense alone essential; the observance or non-observance of religious ordinances and moral laws equally indifferent; consequently all was doubtful and nothing prohibited.

"This was the acme of the philosophy of the Assassins, which was not imparted by the founder to the majority, but reserved only for a few of the initiated and principal leaders, while the people were held under the yoke of the strictest exercise of the precepts of Islamism. His greatest policy consisted in designing his doctrine of infidelity and immorality, not for the ruled, but only for the rulers; in subjecting the tensely reined blind obedience of the former to the equally blind but unbridled despotic commands of the second; and thus he made both serve the aim of his ambition, the former by the renunciation, the latter by the full gratification, of their passions. Study and the sciences were therefore the lot of only a few who

were initiated. For the immediate attainment of their objects the order was less in need of heads than arms; and did not employ pens but daggers, whose points were everywhere, while their hilts were in the hands of the grand-master."

The author of the Masalic-al-Absar *, who speaks as having had a conversation with the son of the chief of the Ismaeleeh, says that they called themselves the "possessors of the rightly directed government," and that their religion was founded on transmigration; that they looked on their chiefs as their purifiers, and on Ali as the great purifier; and that they were descended from the imams and their successors. He says also that he was told that they considered the soul that died in obedience to them went to the "lights above," and all others to the "darkness below."

The miserable remnant of the Assassins or Ismaeleeh of to-day, especially those of Syria, have sunk very low indeed in belief, and if one can credit what is said of them by report, in practice also. What Burckhardt † says of their doctrine seems to be most certainly true, for it is confirmed by the testimony of men of such information and judgment as the late Dr. Eli Smith of Beyrout, and by the general assertion of all classes in Syria, as well as by, it is said, signs used openly by them about their houses. Dr. Smith says that there are at present two sects: the Hedjaweeh, whose sheikh resides in Khawaby, and who adhere to Mussulman customs; and the Suwayda-

* Defrémeny, article on Ismaeleeh in Journ. Asiat.

† Burckhardt (Travels in Syria, p. 152) says, "The Ismaylys are generally reported to adore the *pudendum muliebre*, and to mix on certain days of the year in promiscuous debauchery." Mr. Walpole, in his book (Ansairii and Assassins), gives at the end of vol. iii. a Latin translation of what he calls a prayer of the Ansaireeh, but which really is an Ismaelee prayer, which proves beyond doubt Burckhardt's assertion. Dr. Smith (as quoted in Carl Ritter's Erdkunde) says, "The Ansyreeh are not guilty as the Ismaeleeh of the worship of the goddess of nature." They seem to use what they worship as a symbol of mother earth, and are reported to say, "From it we came, and to it we return."

neeh, who live in Kadmoos and the neighbourhood, are only Mussulmans in appearance, and have no regular feasts.*

The Ismaeleeh at present revere principally the grand-master of the order Rasheed-ed-deen, in whose date M. Rousseau, who has given an account of the modern Ismaeleeh, makes a strange mistake, assigning it to three hundred years ago, whereas we have seen that he flourished during the existence of the power of the order in the latter half of the twelfth century. His books form the chief part of their writings, which "are a shapeless mass of Ismaelee and Christian traditions, glossed over with the ravings of the mystic theology."†

M. Rousseau says of the modern Ismaeleeh ‡:—"The Ismaeleeh of Syria are divided into two classes, the Sweydanis and the Khedrewis, who differ from each other only in certain external ceremonies. Both recognise the divinity of Ali son of Abu-Taleb, and declare that light is the universal principle of all things created. These sectaries call it 'the light of the eye,' an equivocal expression, the source of many superstitions; but the greater part of their sheikhs declared that it is a virtue, a charm or supernatural force, which produces and preserves the different parts of the universe.

"As a consequence of their dissimulation in regard to religion, they have no public temple; they, however, go on pilgrimage to the tomb of Ali, which is erected in the desert four or five days' journey from the ruins of Bagdad. They have also another place of devotion near Mecca, whither they make a secret pilgrimage whenever an opportunity offers, but I have not been able to discover the name of the saint or prophet to whom they have dedicated this shrine."

* Ritter's Erdkunde, vol. above quoted.

† Von Hammer, p. 211.

‡ Mémoires sur les Ismaelis et Nossairis de Syrie, adressé à M. Silv. de Sacy, par M. Rousseau; Annales des Voyages, cahier, xlii.

I shall conclude this enumeration of secret sects by mentioning the Metawalees and the Soofees, not so much because the former are a secret sect in the same sense as the others, as because they are silent concerning themselves, so that little is known about them. Their belief and practice, too, are allied to those of the Persian Mussulmans, whose country was the prolific mother of the above-named heretical sects; and Von Hammer supposes that the Metawalees probably originated in a sect of Ismaelech. They live now principally about and in Tyre, and near the source of the Orontes; and their physiognomy indicates that of a race foreign to the other inhabitants of Syria, and probably from farther east.

They are called Metawalees, because they follow the Taweel, or allegorical interpretation, of the Koran. I have been told that they reverence Ali, as is probably certain, more than Mohammed; and, as a consequence, curse Abu-Becr, Omar, and Othman, who supplanted him. They are more unsociable than any other sect in Syria. Though they will eat with others, they will break a plate or vessel from which a stranger may have eaten or drunk, and even his shadow passing by may suffice to defile their food.

The Soofees are a secret society of Persian mystic philosophers and ascetics. Before giving a short sketch of their tenets as stated by Sir John Malcolm, I will say a few words of the general religion of the Persian nation, ancient and modern. Their original religion may have been that of the Chaldeans, or Sabians, who believed in the unity of God, but adored the host of heaven (Tsaba), especially the seven planets, as representing Him. Zoroaster, the introducer of the Magian religion, or a section of it, taught the existence of two principles, Hormuzd and Ahriman. As light was with him a symbol of the good spirit, he directed them to turn to the fire lighted on the altar, if worshipping in a temple, and to the sun, if worshipping in the open air. These remarks on the

Sabian and Magian religions may be useful when we come to that of the Ansaireeh.

The modern Persians are Schiites, that is those Mussulmans who reject the Sunnah or the code received by the Mussulmans of Turkey and the West, as founded in the traditions of Mohammed, collected and commented upon by the four orthodox doctors. They also look on the first three caliphs as usurpers, and consider Ali at least equal to Mohammed. But many look on him as far superior to him. It is quite a common saying in Persia, "Though I do not believe Ali to be God, I believe that he is not far from being so." In all portraits of him he is represented with his face covered, because, as they allege, the glory of his countenance is too bright for mortal eye to behold.

But the following version of a popular Persian hymn to Ali will show the reader, better than any dissertation, the absurd and blasphemous lengths to which the Schiites carry their reverence for the first imam: —

"Beside thy glories, O most great!
Dim are the stars and weak is fate.
Compared with thy celestial light
The very sun is dark as night.
Thine edicts destiny obeys,
The sun shows but thy mental rays.

"Thy merits form a boundless sea
That rolls on to eternity:
To heaven its mighty waves ascend,
O'er it the skies admiring bend;
And when they view its waters clear,
The wells of Eden dark appear.

"The treasures that the earth conceals,
The wealth that human toil reveals,
The jewels of the gloomy mine,
Those that on regal circlets shine,
Are idle toys and worthless shows,
Compared with what thy grace bestows.

"Mysterious being! None can tell
The attributes in thee that dwell;
None can thine essence comprehend;
To thee should every mortal bend;
For 'tis by thee that man is given
To know the high behests of heaven.

"The ocean-floods round earth that roll,
And lave the shores from pole to pole,
Beside the eternal fountain's stream,
A single drop, a bubble seem;
That fount's a drop beside the sea
Of grace and love we find in thee." *

The Soofees form a separate body in Persia, bound together by secret mysteries. Their books are a strange and beautiful, but blasphemous mysticism, like the poems of Ibn-il-Farid, which are well known and often quoted, but little understood in Syria by the majority of its present ignorant inhabitants. They speak of love to the Deity under that of attachment to a beautiful woman, and their system is really identical with Pantheism.

"The Soofees," says Sir John Malcolm †, "represent themselves as devoted to the search of truth, and incessantly occupied in adoring the Almighty, a union with whom they desire with all the fervour of divine love. The Creator, according to their belief, is diffused over all creation. He exists everywhere and in everything. They compare the emanations of his essence or spirit to the rays of the sun; which they conceive are continually darted forth and reabsorbed. It is for this reabsorption into the divine essence, to which their immortal part belongs, that they continually sigh. They believe that the soul of man, and the principle of life which exists through nature, are not from God, but of God.

"The Soofee doctrines are as old as Mohammed, and are common in India. They became more general in Persia under the Saffavean dynasty (from A.D. 1499), which took

* Taylor's History of Mohammedanism, pp. 152—154.
† Malcolm's Persia, vol. ii. p. 269.

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its rise from a Sooffee sheik. From that time Schiite doctrines have been the recognised ones in Persia.

"The Soofee tenets allow a man to retain outward ceremonies in the first stage. They have four gradations, and secrets and mysteries for every gradation, which are never revealed to the profane. There are from two hundred to three hundred thousand tainted with Soofee doctrines in Persia."

I now come to a point which I omitted while giving a sketch of the several secret heretical sects of Islam in detail—the common charge which is made against them individually, of licentiousness, obscenity, and incest. And here I will include the Ansaireeh, so that I may state the charges made against them at the same time, of which charges I shall show the utter groundlessness, at least in our day, when speaking of their religion under the heads of Faith and Practice.

"The orthodox Mussulmans," then, "accuse the remnants of the secret sects of secret indulgence in gross immoralities, and call them Zendics, a name nearly corresponding with our sceptics or freethinkers. But it would be as unfair to judge of these sectaries by the writings of their enemies, as to take our account of the early Christians from the libels of their Christian persecutors."*

"Similar charges," says Von Hammer†, "have been at all times raised against secret societies, whenever they concealed their mysteries under the veil of night; sometimes groundlessly, as against the assemblies of the early Christians, of whose innocence Pliny affords a testimony; sometimes but too well founded, as against the mysteries of Isis, and, still earlier, against the Bacchanalians of Rome."

With respect to the early history of these sects, it would be certainly difficult or impossible to clear them from the

* Taylor, p. 202. † P. 214.

charges of utter infidelity and materialism (as forming the tenets of the fully initiated), made against them by such writers as De Sacy and Von Hammer, who base their assertions on a careful study of respectable Mussulman, Arabic, and Persian historians, such as Makrisi; especially since these last profess to have drawn their details from the most authentic sources. For instance, Atamelik Jowaini, who gives an account of the doctrine of the Assassins, from which more modern writers, such as Mirkhond and Wassaf, followed by Von Hammer, take theirs, was present at the fall of Alamoot, and obtained from Hoolagoo, its captor, leave to consult the Ismaelee library existing there, which he professes to have done, and then destroyed the heretical books, having first embodied their contents in his own history.* Moreover one of the grand-masters of the Assassins, Hassan II., wishing to stem the torrent of infidelity, and bring back his sect to orthodox Mohammedanism, "lifted the veil, and published to the profane the mysteries of atheism and immorality, hitherto the inheritance of the initiated." † And therefore Von Hammer, though he vindicates the Jesuits and Templars from the charges of regicide and profligacy made against them, declares that what he says of the "secret doctrine, the systematic infidelity, and the sedition of the Assassins is by no means founded on untenable conjectures, historical accusations, or forced confessions, but on the free acknowledgment of their teachers and masters." ‡ In the same way De Sacy accuses the Karmatians of carrying the abuse of philosophy and the system of theology to the greatest extent, with the view of leading men to atheism, materialism the most absolute, and immorality; and says that what he advances is not founded on conjecture nor induction, but on history. §

* Von Hammer, p. 178. † Ibid, p. 106.
‡ Ubi supra. § Exposition of Druzes' Religion, Introd. p. 34.

It is impossible to ascribe all that the orthodox Mussulman authors say of the infidelity of their adversaries to mere religious hate, but it is difficult to believe any charge of gross immorality and incest brought against a large body of men who have existed for any lengthened space of time. And in this I agree rather with M. Niebuhr than M. Volney, who alludes to his opinions.* "The Kadmousia," says Volney, who mistakes the Ismaeleeh of Kadmoos for Ansaireeh, "as I am assured, hold nocturnal assemblies in which, after certain discourses, they extinguish the lights, and indulge promiscuous lust, as has been reported of the ancient Gnostics. M. Niebuhr, to whom the same circumstances were related as to me, could not believe them, because, says he, it is not probable that mankind should so far degrade themselves (which idea he ridicules). The whimsical superstitions I have mentioned may the rather be believed still to exist among the Ansaria, as they seem to have been preserved there by a regular transmission from those ancient times in which they are known to have prevailed."

But whatever may be the case with M. Volney's generalisations as a philosopher, his details as a traveller are not always trustworthy. We have already noticed an absurd mistake of his, and he makes a most ridiculous statement with respect to the Metawalees, which is quoted by Von Hammer.† It is to the effect that there was in his time a village on the road from Ladikeeh to Aleppo, called Martaban, whose Metawalee inhabitants invited travellers to have intercourse with their wives and daughters, and what is more, considered their refusal as an affront. Unfortunately for this story, there are no Metawalees to be found in the parts named.

The more charitable view of human nature is in this case probably the true one. Men do not remain long in such unbridled licentiousness without bringing on them-

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 6. † P. 213.

selves the direct vengeance of God, as did the cities of the plain; or his vengeance none the less because exerted through the agency of their fellow-men, as in the case of the inhabitants of the village to which Ibn-Batoutah alludes, and the Bacchanalians of old or, lastly, through the inevitable causes of dissolution attending immorality and crime. The mass of mankind are opposed to the existence of the worst forms of open vice; if they were not, civil government would come to an end in communities where reason or instinct, rather than religion, is the guide. It is not to be denied that communities did exist of old, in which, as among the votaries of Isis and Cybele, licentiousness prevailed, but then these were but festering sores existing in a large body, and these communities formed the receptacle for those impurities which exist in every large society. And in fact, with respect to the early history of the secret sects which we have considered, it is only asserted that the minority, the governing body, attained to an emancipation from all the rules of morality. The great body of the sectaries were only tools made use of by them towards the gratification of their own evil propensities.

Makrisi, indeed, mentions a sect of Magians, followers of Masdeli, "who declared war against all religion and morality, and preached universal liberty and equality, the indifference of human actions, and community of goods and women," but "this scandalous brood was exterminated by fire and sword," after but a short period of triumph.*

Makrisi, also †, describes a sect of Rafedech as allowing the drinking wine and fornication, and denying a paradise or the contrary, except in this world, but it does not seem that they formed an important or noted part of the general body of the Rafedech, which included the many branches of those who ascribed divine honour to Ali.

* Von Hammer, p. 25.

† Description of Egypt, vol. ii. p. 352 : ed. Boulak.

It is possible that part of the accusations brought against the secret sects has arisen from a misinterpretation of their allegorical language. They certainly have themselves to thank for this, if innocent, because their founders used language which might easily lead to the worst excesses.

We have seen that some of the inhabitants of the mountain, where resided Rasheed-ed-deen Sinan, made some language which he had used a pretext for breaking out into licentiousness, but that they were severely punished by him for this. Hamza, the Druse apostle, charges similar and even more objectionable language against the Nusairee whose book he refutes, of which I will translate as much from De Sacy as will bear quotation:—

"There has fallen into my hands," says Hamza, in the preamble, "a book composed by a man among the Nasaireeh. He has styled his book 'the book of truths, and the manifestation of that which was veiled.' Whoever receives this book is a servant of the devil. He believes in metempsychosis, he permits all kinds of illicit unions, he approves lying and falsehood. This writer attributes this doctrine to the Unitarians, but God forbid that the religion of our Lord should authorise criminal actions!" *

Hamza passes next to the direct refutation of the Nusairee dogmas. "The first thing," says he, "which this wicked Nusairee advances, is that all things which have been forbidden to men, murder, theft, lying, calumny, fornication, sodomy, are permitted to him, or to her, who knows our Lord. With respect to what he says, 'the believer ought not to prevent his brother from taking away his property and his honour; he ought to let his believing brother have full liberty to see the people of his house (that is, his wives and daughters), and ought not to

* De Sacy, vol. ii. p. 568.

oppose anything which may pass between them, else his faith will be imperfect;' he lies, the accursed one. He has stolen the first part of this phrase—I mean the words 'he ought not to prevent his brother from taking away his property and his honour,'—from the Medjlis of wisdom, and he has abused them to conceal his own impiety and falsehood. . . . . As to what he says, 'the prohibition of illicit intercourse is only for those who speak things contrary to the truth: that is, fornication. But those who know the inner doctrine are not subject to the yoke of the outer;' he lies," &c.*

De Sacy seems to endorse the accusation of the Druse writer, for he says, "What the Druse books teach us with respect to the Nasaireeh prove that in fact they permitted fornication, incest, and adultery, without any reserve †;" but, as he himself shows, the Druses themselves use an allegorical language likely to be misunderstood, and in fact Hamza himself, in the above extract, accuses the Nusairee writer of having stolen the words, which, according to him, he abuses, from the Druse or Ismaelee writings. His statements, however, are to be received with caution as those of an enemy, and at least one thing is certain, that, as to theoretical opinions, no appearance, even the slightest, of immorality or obscenity is to be traced in the Ansairee books which have become known in our day; while, as to practice, the charges made against the Ansaireeh of the present time, of unclean practices, are utterly without foundation.

Similar charges are and have been made against the other sects. Benjamin of Tudela accuses the Druses of his day of "living incestuously, and indulging in promiscuous intercourse;" and De Sacy, though he speaks of the immorality which appears in the Druse writings ‡, says

* P. 570. † Vol. i. p. 183.

‡ Vol. ii. p. 692, note. Mr. Cyril Graham, who has seen so much of the Druses of to-day, has told me that he thinks immoral charges against

that he would not take upon himself to deny that the Druses of to-day are innocent of the "libertinage" and the infamous actions which report imputes to them. He says, moreover, that the early Druse writer Moktana alludes to impostors who, in his day, endeavoured to corrupt the morals of the sect, in order to gain partisans; such as Sakkeen, who was admitted to the hierarchy of the Druses soon after the commencement of the sect, and was intrusted with the "diocese" of Northern Syria. He introduced changes into the Druse religion, and is condemned in a letter found among existing Druse writings. "It even seems to me," says De Sacy, "that this immoral doctrine was taught in Syria by Neshtekern-id-Darazi."

Von Hammer too, speaking of the Ansaireeh and Druses, says: "The former believe, like the Ismaelites, in the incarnation of Ali; the latter consider that maddest of tyrants, Hakem-biaun-illah, as a God in the flesh. Both abjure all the rules of Islamism, or only observe them in appearance; both hold secret and nocturnal assemblies, stigmatised by the Moslems, where they give themselves up to the enjoyment of wine and promiscuous intercourse."

The chief origin of these stories with respect to the Ansaireeh is, beside their profession of a secret religion, the fact that their neighbours, the Ismaeleeh, do hold tenets of an obscene character, though even they, I believe, are not guilty of all that is imputed to them. These stories are passed from mouth to mouth, and told to those who skirt the mountains in journeying by land, or who view them from the sea, on passing along the coast. I have often heard them repeated, sometimes with that zest with which such stories are circulated, by the officers of the French steamers which ply past Ladikeeh. But

them utterly groundless, and considers them more moral than the people of the towns.

* P. 212.

this is more excusable in them than in a traveller like M. Poujoulat, who, if I remember right, connects his travels with M. Michaud's flowery history of the crusades. The source of his mistake is, as usual, the confounding them with the Ismaeleeh, as appears from what he says in another place, where he speaks of certain men as "paying to women the same worship as the 'Ansariens' of Lebanon." His words are: — "These nocturnal and monstrous reunions call to mind those of the like nature which are held in the mountains of the Ansariens of Syria, and which are called Bokheeh" (fête de l'empoignement, grasping).

This story he has taken from a vulgar report which ascribes to the Ansaireeh such doings on a reputed feast of theirs called Bukbeyshee. The story is familiar to the Ansaireeh, and as they neither know of the feast, nor are acquainted with such a mode of celebration of it, it is to them a subject of much merriment; for they are aware that their character is looked on as the blackest, and they are not a little amused at the false conjectures of their neighbours, without being much concerned about a few handfuls of mud, more or less, being thrown at them. As I shall have in a future chapter to consider that character, which is indeed none of the brightest, it will be as well to leave till then the relieving it from one of its darkest shades.

To the next chapter too, having so far lifted the veil of the "Great Asian Mystery," with the aid of other writers, we will leave the further illustration of that mystery, and allusions to its connexion with the modern mystery of Freemasonry.

We shall thus endeavour to carry out the special object of our book, with the assistance to be obtained from others, and the information we have been able to acquire from the Ansairee MS., careful observation, and trustworthy information.

CHAP. V.

RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF THE ANSAIREEH.

I. *Faith or Theology.*

THE Ansaireeh believe in one God, self-existent and eternal. This God manifested himself in the world seven times in human *form*, from Abel to Ali son of Abu-Taleb, which last manifestation was the most perfect; that to which the others pointed, and in which the mystery of the divine appearances found their chief end and completion.

At each of these manifestations the Deity made use of two other Persons; the first created out of the light of his essence, and by himself, and the second created by the first. These, with the Deity, form an inseparable Trinity, called MAANA, ISM, BAB.

The first, the Maana, *meaning*, is the designation of the Deity as the meaning, sense, or reality of all things.

The second, the Ism, *name*, is also called the *Hedjah* or veil, because under it the Maana conceals its glory, while by it it reveals itself to men.

The third, the Bab, *door*, is so called because through it is the entrance to the knowledge of the two former.

In the time of Adam, when Abel was the Maana, Adam was the Ism, and Gabriel the Bab. In the time of Mohammed, when Ali was the Maana, Mohammed the prophet was the Ism, and Salmân-il-Farisee, or the Persian, a companion of Mohammed, was the Bab.

The following are the seven appearances of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab: —

	Maana (meaning).	Ism (name).	Bab (door).
1.	Abel	Adam	Gabriel.
2.	Seth	Noah	Yayeel ibn-Fatin.
3.	Joseph	Jacob	Ham ibn-Koosh.
4.	Joshua	Moses	Dan ibn-Usbaoot.
5.	Asaph	Solomon	Abdullah ibn-Simaân.
6.	Simon-is-Safa (Cephas)	Jesus	Rozabah ibn-il-Merzaban.
7.	Ali	Mohammed	Salmân-il-Farisee.

After Ali, the Deity manifested himself in the Imams, his posterity, he himself being the first Imam, the Imam of the Imams, as he is styled.

And here we have to recal to mind Sharestani's description of the descent of the Deity into human forms, that it is either total or partial, a descent of the whole Deity, or of only a portion of his essence. The descent in the eleven Imams after Ali is of this latter description. Ali is still the grand manifestation of the Deity to man, so that he occupies in person and name, with respect to man, the position of the Deity himself; all divine attributes being ascribed to him as Ali, and all prayers made to him in the name of Ali. And we find that the Imams are looked upon only as his representatives in the world, and in some sense as his prophets and apostles.

The secret of the above Trinity is represented by a sign, token, or mark to the true believers, namely, the three letters Ain, Meem, Seen, which are the three initial letters of Ali, Mohammed, and Salmân (sometimes styled *Salsal*).

Among the many worlds known only to God, are two, the Great *Luminous* World, which is the heaven, "the light of light," and the little earthly world, the residence of men.

An Ansairee has to believe in the existence in the Luminous, *Spiritual* World, of seven Hierarchies (each with seven degrees), which hierarchies have their representa-

tives in the earthly world. They are, (1.) Abwâh, or doors, 400 in number; (2.) Aytâm, orphans or disciples, 500 in number; (3.) Nukaha, princes, or chiefs (the companions of Moses and properly so called), 600 in number; (4.) Nudjaba, excellent, 700 in number; (5.) Mokhtasseen, peculiars, 800 in number; (6.) Mukhliseen, pure in faith, 900 in number; (7.) Mumtahaneen, tried, 1100 in number. In all, 5000.

In this world they have their representatives in twelve Nukaba, and also twenty-eight Nudjaba, who, besides their earthly names, have names in the world of light, namely, those of the twenty-eight mansions, or stations of the moon. They have also their counterparts in apostles and prophets; who are, moreover, representatives of the Deity, as being inhabited by a partial emanation from Him.

This earthly world in like manner contains seven degrees of believers; (1.) Mukarrabeen, near ones, 14,000 in number; (2.) Cherubims, 15,000; (3.) Rooheyeen, spiritual, 16,000; (4.) Mukaddaseen, sanctified, 17,000; (5.) Saieyeen, ascetics, 18,000; (6.) Mustamaeen, listeners, 19,000; (7.) Lahiheen, followers, 20,000. In all, 119,000.

The mystery of the faith of the Unitarians, the mystery of mysteries, and chief article of the faith of the true believers, is the veiling of the Deity in light, that is, in the eye of the sun, and his manifestation in his servant Abd-in-Noor. Light is described as the eternal Maana, or meaning, which is concealed in light. The Deity thus concealed in light manifests himself in Abd-in-Noor, the "servant of light," which is wine; this wine being consecrated and drunk by the true believers, the initiated, in the Kuddâs, or Sacrament.

This Kuddâs or Sacrament is the great mystery of the Ansairech.

The Ansairech believe that all souls were created from the essence which inhabits all beings, and that, after a certain number of transmigrations, those of true believers become stars in the great world of light.

They believe that the last Imam, Mohammed, is still dwelling concealed on the earth, and that he will return to make the true religion prevail in the destruction of its enemies.

When an Ansairee attains the age of manhood he is initiated into the mysteries of religion, and becomes a participator in its rites, and acquainted with its secret prayers, signs, and watchwords, by all which the initiated are bound up into a freemasonic body of Ukhwân, or "brethren."

Such is a sketch of the religion of the Ansaireeh, I now proceed to consider its several parts in detail.

Like the Druses, the Ansaireeh believe in God, without in either a philosophical or theological manner defining distinctly the mode of his existence, his essence, and his attributes. Ali with the Ansaireeh is God, and takes the place of the Allah of the Mussulmans. All the attributes that the latter ascribe to Allah, these and others the Ansaireeh ascribe to Ali; some to him in his human form, others in his Godhead. They come very near confusing his essence with that of light. He is spoken of in their catechism as veiling himself in light, that is in the eye of the sun*, and in my Ansairee manuscript† he is described as "appearing from the eye of the sun." Mohammed is also said to be created from the "light of his essence"‡, and the "light of his unity."§ While, in answer to the question in the catechism‖, "What is light?" the answer is: "The eternal Maana, or meaning (the Deity), which is concealed in light." *Perhaps* they go no farther than Zoroaster and the Magians, in taking light as a symbol of the good spirit.¶

* Q. 82. † MS. p. 110. ‡ P. 94. § P. 110. ‖ Q. 93.

¶ In the Ansairee book of festivals (M. Catafago, Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848) the Divinity is styled the "essence of beings;" and a certain rain which came on the luminous bodies of men, and of which the drops became their souls, is said to be nothing else but "the essence which inhabits all beings."

Among the appellations given to Ali are those of "the meaning of meanings," "the element of elements," the "end of ends," a name by which my Ansairee lad has often heard him addressed.

The proof that he is God, is his own testimony to himself from the words of the Koran, which in its inner meaning is made to allude exclusively to him. Thus the commencement of my Ansairee manuscript, after the usual opening, "In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful," goes on:—"The words of the Most High. Our Lord, Emeer il Moomeneen (prince of the true believers, a name which must be given to Ali alone*), has said, 'God (may he be praised!) has described me in his precious Book, and said, He is the God, beside whom there is no God, the compassionate, the merciful, the holy king, the Creator; Him all things praise in heaven and earth.' Now these attributes belong to Him (God), and are in Him; for it is necessary for him to describe himself (because no other being could do so), but they are in me, and referred to me, and part of my descriptive marks, for when he says, 'He is God,' it refers to me, for I am," &c. &c.

Another testimony is that of Ali to himself in his several discourses from the pulpit, of which many are mentioned by name†; for instance: "With me is the knowledge of the hour, and me did the apostles indicate; of my unity did they speak, and to the knowledge of me did they call."

Another chief testimony is that of Mohammed on a special occasion, a detailed account of which is given in my Ansairee manuscript‡, and of it I shall give a translation in a subsequent chapter.§

Ali is said to be mentioned in every tongue, and praised in every period ‖; and so excessive is the laudation bestowed upon him in the manuscript in my possession, that on

* MS. p. 86. † MS. pp. 6, 10, 11, 12, 15. Catechism, q. 2.
‡ MS. p. 91. So Catech. q. 3. § Chap. IX. ‖ MS. p. 4.

showing it to a learned Moslem sheikh, he could not help exclaiming, "excess of praise is blame."

Among the "names given to him in the various languages*," the following are mentioned: "The Arabs called him Ali; his mother called him Haiderah, lion; the monk called him the most great Law, and Simon-is-Safa' (the Ansaireeh, like the Ismaeleeh and Druses, seeming to look on Safa as allied to an Arabic word meaning pure, instead of being the Arabic form for Cephas). He called himself in the pulpit Aristotle; and he is called in the Old Testament Bareea (from the word for 'create'). His name in the New Testament is Elias, of which the interpretation is Ali (the two words as written in the Arabic MS. are nearly alike). With the priests he is called Baweea; by the Hindoos, Kankara; and in the Psalms, Areea; with the Greeks, Butrus, Peter. His name with the Ethiopians is Habeena (a mistake for Aboonà, the name of the Abyssinian metropolitan); with the Abyssinians, Batreek, patriarch; and the Armenians called him Afreeka. Finally he is called by the beings who inhabited the world before men, the Righteous, the Compassionate."

Among other names of his is that of Emeer-in-Nahal, prince of bees, that is true believers, who are styled bees because they choose out the best flowers, that is follow the best instruction.† This name is given to him constantly.

He is also called the Crown of the Kieras, as the Sassanide kings of Persia are called by the Arabs, from Khosroo or Chosroes; and in a description of the feast of Nurooz, given in an Ansairee book‡, Ali is said to have manifested himself in the Trinity of Maana, Ism, Bab, in the persons of many of the kings of the Sassanide line; though in that partial way in which the Divinity resides in worthy men, rather than by a complete descent. In this, as in many other ways, the connexion of the Ansairee

* MS. p. 77. Catech. q. 43. † MS. p. 86. Catech. q. 50.

‡ Described by M. Catafago, Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848.

religion with Persia becomes evident. Ali is spoken of as having exercised all that power, and performed all those actions, attributed by Mussulmans to the Deity. He is said to have created us*; to have formed Jesus within the womb of his mother†; to have sent and taught Mohammed‡; to be omnipresent, omniscient, &c. &c.§

But the Ansaireeh do not suppose Ali to have been flesh and blood, but rather a luminous appearance. They speak of his acts as *zahir*, apparent only. For instance, says the Ansairee lad, they say that he was not really married; for how, say they, could he, being God?

Thus, in one passage, the appearances of the Creator are spoken of, and his goodness in Tanees, the holding intercourse with men; and in the same place he is called "the best of sheaths, within a sheath."‖

Also it is asserted, according to the well-known words of the 112th chapter of the Koran, that "He neither begat, nor was begotten; neither had he any equal:" and then is added, "*and he was not incarnate in anybody*, nor took a female companion, nor a child."¶

In the catechism, in answer to the question**, "If Ali be God, how did he become of the same nature with men?" the reply is, "He did not so become, but took Mohammed as his veil, in the period of his transmutation, and assumed the name of Ali." And in answer to the question††, "What is the divine appearance?" the reply is, "It is the appearance of the Creator in humanity by means of the veil;" and in answer to the demand to explain the matter more exactly‡‡, the reply is, "As the Maana is entered into the Bab, so it has concealed itself under the Ism, and has taken it for itself, as our lord Djaafar-is-Sadik has said."

* Catech. q. 1, and MS. passim. † MS. p. 7.
‡ MS. p. 21. § MS. passim.
‖ MS. p. 32. That is Ali was a Gilâf (sheath as of a sword, or pod as of a pea) of the Deity; and this Gilâf was concealed in another Gilâf, namely Mohammed, the Hedjah or veil.
¶ MS. p. 101. ** Q. 4. †† Q. 8. ‡‡ Q. 9.

Withal, he is often spoken of in his human connexions, and he is said to have been the only Hashimee in his time (that is, a descendant of Hashim, the great-grandfather of Mohammed), who was so both by his father's and mother's side.* His *apparent* mother's name is given as Fatima, and his brothers as Hamza and Djaafar, Talib and Akeel; his sons, as Hassan and Hosein; and his daughters, as Zeynab and Umur Kulthom; and, finally, his Mashid (or mosque erected over his tomb) is said to be in Dakwat-il-Beyd, to the west of Cufa. †

The Druses seem, in like manner, to think that Hamza's humanity was only in appearance; and their belief with respect to Hakem is so like that of the Ansaireeh with respect to Ali, that I refer the reader to those few and concise, but clear and accurate, words of De Sacy, regarding the manifestation of the Deity in human form, to which I drew his attention in p. 78.

Before proceeding further, I would allude to something found in Niebuhr's Ansairee book. He says: — "In another place the author states that an Ansairee must believe that Mohammed, Fatir (Fatima), Hassan, Hosein, and Mochsin (the three sons of Ali by Fatima), form but one, a Unity, and mean Ali." ‡ Now Makrisi § alludes to certain men who "asserted the divinity of five, Mohammed, Ali, Fatima, Hassan, and Hosein, and declared that these five were one;" and, not liking to say Fatima, with a feminine termination, they called her Fatim. Thus we see whence the Ansairee author, or his authority, took his statement. And I would say, once for all, that if it seems incongruous with the outline of Ansairee theology which I have given, it is to be remembered that incongruities must be expected in a religion compiled by ignorant men, from everything that came to hand; with

* MS. p. 87. † MS. pp. 87, 88. Catech. q. 45—48.
‡ Travels, vol. ii. p. 360.
§ Descr. of Cairo and Egypt, vol ii. p. 253.

a desire, which the Ansaireeh above all others seem to have, of claiming every belief as their own.

The seven appearances of the Divinity, from Abel to Ali, are said to have taken place in seven kubbehs, literally Domes, that is, Periods, such as the period or dome of Abraham, the Persian dome, the Arab dome, or dome of Mohammed.* These appearances are referred to four times † in my Ansairee manuscript, and the names given to those persons in whom Ali appeared are the same in each place, as also are the names in the seven appearances given by Niebuhr, and in the Nusairee catechism. ‡ In fact, this is one of the many instances of entire conformity in the Ansairee MSS., which have been obtained at various times, and in such various ways; a conformity the more remarkable, when we consider the heterogeneous nature of the Ansairee tenets, and the wild and seemingly aimless haphazard character of some of their elements.

We will now speak of that "inseparable Trinity," under which the Deity reveals itself in each of its manifestations, of which the three persons are designated by the names of Maana, Ism, and Bab.

And I would say at the outset that we must not suppose this Trinity to resemble that of Christianity, though the name and idea have been taken by the Ansaireeh from it, like many other things. The second and third persons, the Ism and the Bab, have far more affinity with the two chief Druse ministers, the "universal intelligence," and the "universal soul," as we shall see when we come to treat of them separately; indeed, the third person is called by the name, the "universal soul," given to the second great minister of the Druse hierarchy.

The word Maana, meaning or sense, is used by the Druse writers Baha-ed-deen, one of their earliest and chief

* MS. pp. 41, 42, 131. † MS. pp. 8, 41, 90, 130.

‡ Q. 5. See also Victor Langlois, Revue d'Orient.

authors, says:—"Praise to the Lord, to God, who is distinguished from all other beings, in that He alone is the Maana (sense) of all the divine manifestations." * But, as says De Sacy †, "this expression is especially sacred in the religion of the Ansaireeh, with whom, even at the present time, it signifies the Divinity concealed under human form;" and he gives an extract from M. Niebuhr's Ansairee book, which had been lent to him by that traveller. "The Ansairee author," says De Sacy, "after having cited divers texts from the discourses pronounced by Ali, adds: 'All these testimonies and these luminous discourses show the existence of the *Maana* of the Creator of creatures, under a human form.'" ‡

In another place the same author says: "The word Allah (God) is derived from Alaha (to adore), and the word God supposes necessarily a being adored, and a name is different from the thing named by it. He, then, who worships the Name (Ism) in the place of the Meaning (Maana) is an infidel, and does not worship anything; and he who worships the Name and the Meaning is a polytheist; but to worship the Meaning to the exclusion of the Name, that is true Unitarianism." §

From this passage we see that of the Trinity only the first person is to be worshipped, and not even the second person or Name, for he is a different being from Him whom he represents, who alone is the great God.

In the Ansairee catechism are the following questions: ‖ "What are the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab?" Answer: "They are an inseparable Trinity, as men say, 'in the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful' (a formula prefixed to all the chapters of the Koran except one). The word God signifies the Maana, the words Compassionate and Merciful denote the Ism and the Bab."—"Are the Maana and the Bab separable from

* De Sacy, vol i. p. 60.
† Vol. ii. p. 580.
‡ Ubi supra.
§ De Sacy, vol. ii. p. 581.
‖ Q. 10, 12, 13.

the Ism?" Answer: "No; they are one with it, they cannot be separated."—"What names have the Maaña, the Ism, and the Bab, and how are they distinguished?" Answer: "These names are threefold. 1. Figurative; 2. Essential; 3. Attributive. The Figurative belong to the Maaña; the Essential belong to the Ism; the Attributive are those of which the Ism has made use, but which belong peculiarly to the Maana. As when we say, the Gracious one, the Compassionate one, the Creator."

So in another question:* "What do the outer and inner word, Iz-Zahir and Il-Batin, denote?" Answer: "The inner, the Godhead of our Lord; the outer, his Manhood. Outwardly we say that he is spoken of as our Lord Ali, son of Abu-Taleb; and this denotes inwardly the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab, one Gracious and Compassionate God."

Maana is a name specially belonging to the Deity.† Some other names, though attributive names of the Maana, are sometimes assumed by the Ism, such as God, the Creator, &c. &c.; or, as the manuscript expresses it: "The attributive names, by which the Ism (Name) has named itself, though they belong peculiarly to the Maana." ‡

In my Ansairee manuscript the Maana and Essence are coupled together in one passage §; and in another ‖ the Ism and Bab are spoken of as referring to, and indicating, the Maana of Ali, in the seven Domes or Periods; and this indication is the office of these two persons, with reference to the first divine person. In my manuscript also the words Maana, Ism, and Bab are frequently mentioned together, as forming an essential part of the Ansairee religion. Thus ⸸, referring to some quotations from the Koran with respect to the divinity of Ali, it is said: "And many other similar passages indicate the knowledge of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab." Again, a certain wife of Mohammed, Umur Salmah, is spoken of

* Q. 97. † MS. p. 89. ‡ MS. p. 75.
§ MS. p. 66. ‖ P. 131. ⸸ P. 17.

as, "by her 'nearness' to the apostle indicating the appearances of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab." * In another place Ali is invoked "by the truth of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab." † In other passages reference is made to the Maana-il-Kadeem (ancient Meaning), the Ism-il-Azeem (great Name), and the Bab-il-Kareem and Makeem (honourable and durable Door).‡

These words also are found in all the known books of the Ansaireeh. Thus Niebuhr speaks of them; but as these appearances, in the book in his possession, were coupled with those of five orphans and of a certain Hosein, the famous apostle of the Ansaireeh who spread their religion, he terms the manifestations of the Deity a *Quintité*, which he professes himself unable to explain.

M. V. Langlois § refers to the same words, and says: "The dogmas of the Ansaireeh are: The divinity of Ali, son-in-law of Mohammed, who was incarnate seven times; and a Trinity, renewed at seven different epochs, and under diverse names. This Trinity is called Maana, Ism, Bab. They denote this Trinity by the letters Ain, Meem, Seen, which are the initial letters of the names of Ali, Mohammed, and Salmân-el-Farsi."

M. Catafago also, in describing an Ansairee book ‖, after giving the title, says "that the author distinguishes three principles in Ali. 1. The divinity properly so called, or the essence of beings. 2. The light or veil (Hedjab). 3. The door, which is the faithful soul."

We see again the entire agreement of the several MSS. consulted, with reference at least to all the main Ansairee dogmas, and we shall find that they no less agree in minor points.

Mohammed is the Ism, Name, or second person of that triune manifestation of the Deity which took place at the

* MS. p. 40. † P. 41. ‡ MS. pp. 44 and 158.
§ Revue d'Orient, Juin, 1856.
‖ Notice on Ansaireeh, Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848.

most perfect period, that of Ali. Thus the form of Mohammed is the most perfect of the seven manifestations of the Ism, of which the six previous were in the persons of Adam (who is looked on by the Mussulmans also as a prophet), Noah, Jacob, Moses, Solomon, and Jesus. On comparing these with the corresponding manifestations of the Maana, we shall find that the seven personages of this last are less noted than the seven of the Ism. Such personages as Abel, Seth, Joseph, Joshua, Asaph, and Peter, seem chosen for the manifestations of the Deity, because of their comparative seclusion when in the world, possessing only such notoriety as was necessary to give them sufficient importance for the use made of them in the Ansairee system. The Deity, even in Ali's time, is supposed to reveal itself to men by means of the Ism, called also the Hedjab, because the Ism veils as it were the insupportable brightness of the Deity from the eyes of mortals. This expression or idea seems to have been taken from the Hedjabs or veils used before the doors of the halls of audience of great men. Thus the caliphs of Bagdad had, as their special prerogative, seven veils before their audience chamber, to raise and lower which was the duty of the Hadjib, or chamberlain, whose denomination was taken from his office.* The term is often applied to Mohammed in my Ansairee MS.† In the 3rd mass published in the Journal of the German Oriental Society, it is said: "There is no Hedjab but our Lord Mohammed-il-Mahmood," the praised; for this, and another denomination, Mohammed-il-Hamd, or "the Praise," is given to him, on account of the likeness of the adjective to the noun proper; just as Salmân is called Is-Salaam, the Peace, and Salsal, pure wine, or pure water.

As Hamza appeared several times, so did Mohammed, for the same person who was the Ism during one period was identical with the one who appeared at another,

* Von Hammer, p. 93.

† Pp. 8, 10, 40, 61, 144.

though under a different form. Thus the most perfect appearance of the Ism as Mohammed, had before appeared as Jesus*, so that in the prayer for the eve of Christmas, given by M. Catafago†, appear these words:—"Thou (Ali) didst manifest in that night thy Name, which is thy Soul, thy Veil, thy Throne, to all creatures, as a child, and under human form; while with Thee that Name is the greatest and most sacred being of all that is found in thy kingdom. Thou didst manifest thyself to men, to prove thine eternity and thy divinity. Thou dost manifest thyself to them in the person of thy Hudjjäh ('demonstration'), to recompense those who shall have recognised thy divinity at the epoch when thou didst call men to thy religion in sacrificing thyself for their redemption."

However, though the Ansaireeh use this language, they do not believe in the reality of the crucifixion, but hold the Mussulman view based on the words of Mohammed in the Koran‡, which he took from the early Christian heretics, and probably from a spurious gospel:—"The Jews have spoken against Mary a grievous calumny; and have said, Verily we have slain Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, the apostle of God. Yet they slew him not, neither crucified him, but he was represented (to them) by one in his likeness; and verily they who disagreed concerning him were in a doubt as to this matter, and had no sure knowledge thereof, but followed only an uncertain opinion. They did not really kill him; but God took him up unto himself." This passage is cited in my MS.§; and once when I was speaking to an Ansairee sheikh about the death of our blessed Saviour, he used the blasphemous expression, "May God have no mercy on any one who died for me!"

Mohammed holds much the same position with respect

* Victor Langlois, ubi supra.
† Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848.
‡ Soorah, iv. v. 156.
§ P. 2. See also Catech. q. 75.

to Ali in the Ansairee belief, that Hamza places himself in with respect to Hakem. He is made to say of himself: "For I was created out of the light of His (Ali's) essence,"* and farther to show his inferiority immediately after he says: "Is not Ali my Lord and your Lord?" So that, as we have said, the Ansairee Trinity is not a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead.

Further, in the same passage, Mohammed asks the question: "Is not Ali my creator and yours?"† And in the Ansairee catechism, in answer to the question‡: "How did the Maana create the Ism, and how did the Ism create the Bab?" it is said: "The substance of substances created the Name out of the light of his unity."

In another passage of my MS.§, Ali is addressed as having "created the Lord Mohammed from the light of his unity and from the power of his eternity." "And He made him a light extracted from the essence of His Meaning, and called him Mohammed at the time when he conversed with him, and caused him to move out of his state of rest, and chose him, and called him by his name, and elected him. And he had no Lord but him, and He made him His flashing light and His sharp edge and His speaking tongue, and set him over the great matter and the ancient cause, and made him the circle of existence and the centre of prayer" (Mihrâb, the point in mosques towards which prayer is made, as marking out the Kublah or direction of Mecca), "by the command of the Lofty one, the worshipped. And He said to him: Be the Cause of causes, and the framer of the *Doors*, and at them (the doors) the Hedjab, veil" (so as to be intermediate between the glory of the Deity and men). "He (Mohammed) created the Door (Salmân) by the

* MS. pp. 94, 95.

† In my MS., at page 178, Mohammed is called the "best of *created* beings."

‡ Q. 11. § Pp. 110, 111.

command of his Lord, and His End (Gaiyah), and His Meaning; and he removed hurt and calamity from the Door. He commanded him to create the 'higher and lower worlds. So he guided them (the inhabitants of the lower worlds) to all the pure worlds." Thus we see that Ali created all things through the instrumentality of Mohammed.

There is some difficulty in accounting for the way in which the Ism or Name is sometimes spoken of, that is, the names which are sometimes given to it in the Ansairee book. Perhaps the best explanation is, that some of these discrepancies have crept in gradually in the course of time, and escape the observation, or at least explanation, of the present teachers of religion. For these, or their predecessors, have certainly sometimes mystified themselves, as appears from some of the answers in the Ansairee catechism. Thus, after a number of most silly names given to the degrees of the seven spiritual hierarchies of the world of light,—which names are seemingly collected with much difficulty from various objects, such as lights, suns, &c.; moons, lightnings, &c.; prayer, alms, &c.; mountains, seas, &c.; night, day, &c.; camels, bees, &c.; houses, mosques, &c.—the question is put:* "How were these seven hierarchies called in the world of light, before their appearance in the earthly world?" And the answer is: "They had other names in heaven;" as if the framer of these mystic hierarchies was either wearied with his work, or in despair of finding suitable names in his exhausted imagination. Otherwise, the flights he sometimes takes show that he would not have shrunk from the wildest conceptions. Again, to the question, "How is it that the Nadjeebs have two names, one in the earthly world, and the other in the world of light?" the answer is simply, that "they have just two names." So, if we cannot reconcile every

* Q. 54.

imaginative statement of the Ansairee theology, we need neither wonder nor be deeply grieved.

In my Ansairee MS., then, there are these consecutive invocations of Ali, in some of which the Name is spoken of in rather an inexplicable way.* "I invoke thee, my Lord, by the names of the Name according to the rules of language, which names are, Ahmed Mohammed the chosen, Y.S. (and other similar cabalistic letters prefixed to some chapters of the Koran), and in the Old Testament Mad al Mad, and in the New Testament Parakleet, and in the Psalms Muhaimin (a title of God, the 'observer of actions'), in the Koran Mohammed; good is the Veil!" Again: "I invoke thee by the names of the Name in the essential nine †, which are Adam, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Solomon, Jesus, Abdullah (father of Mohammed), Mohammed the apostle of God, and Mohammed son of Hassan, the Demonstration; O God, my Lord, that thou wilt raise us by them to the highest rank, and save us from all calamity and distress, by the truth of Mohammed the son of Hassan, the Demonstration (the last Imam)."

We see here that Noah is omitted and Aaron introduced in the seven appearances of the Name; Aaron being admitted into the number of the seven mute "foundations" (Asas) of the seven speaking prophets, in the original Ismaelee system before described. Abdullah and the Imam Mohammed are also added, for what reason we confess we cannot at present see.

Another invocation is "by the names of the Name in the Abrahamic Dome, which are Abraham, Ishmael, Elias, Kusai (an ancestor of Mohammed), and Isaac:" the next is by the same in the Mosaic Dome, "which are Moses, Aaron, Shabbar, Shabeer, and Mushabbir (three sons of Aaron, according to the Mussulmans):" and lastly, by the same in the Dome of Mohammed, "which

* MS. pp. 60, &c. Catech. q. 16, 17.

† Meaning, perhaps, special manifestations of the Name.

are Mohammed, Fatir (Fatima), Hassan, Hosein, and Mohsin." Probably, as these last are reckoned only as one (see above), so the other five, in the previous period of Moses, and also of Abraham, are so reckoned.

The next invocation is exceedingly obscure in its wording. It is, "by the sixty-three names, consecutive names of the Name, through which the Name executed prophecy and consecutive apostleship for the Maana and Essence." Or, as the fourteenth question of the catechism has it, "What are the sixty-three names of the Name, which, spiritually taken, denote the Maana (sense), and personally the Name — those of which the Godhead has made use to manifest himself in the persons of the prophets and apostles?" These form such a curious mixture, that I will add them here, broken into groups. "Adam, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Yarid (written Gazid), Edrees (Mussulman name for Enoch), Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Arphaxad; Yareb (descendant of Ishmael); Hood, Saleb, Lokman (prophets, &c., mentioned in the Koran); Lot, Abraham, Ishmael; Alyâs (an ancestor of Mohammed); Kusai; Isaac, Jacob, Shuaib (Mussulman name for Jethro), Moses, Aaron, Kawlab (Caleb?), Ezekiel, Samuel, Taloot (Mussulman name for Saul), David, Solomon, Job, Jonah, Isaiah; Heysa (a descendant of Ishmael); the Khudy (a Mussulman or Christian personage according to circumstances; when Christian, Elijah or St. George), Zechariah, John, Jesus, Daniel, Alexander; Ardesheer, Sapon (the first two Persian kings of the Sassanian dynasty); Luai, Murrah, Kilâb, Kusai, Abd-Manaf, Hashim, Abd-il-Muttalab, Abdullah (ancestors of Mohammed); Mohammed the chosen; Hossum the elected, Hosein the martyr in Kerbela, Ali the ornament of true believers, Mohammed the investigator; Djaafar the just, Moses the patient, Ali the accepted, Mohammed the generous, Ali the director, Hassan the Askeree, and the Imam Mohammed son of Hassan the demonstration, the chief, the director, the preacher, the

warner, the hoped-for, the expected, lord of the age and time" (the last eleven being the eleven Imams after Ali). On looking among these persons, we see the names of the seven in which the Name is said especially to manifest itself. Its manifestation in the others can hardly be of the like nature, but by influence rather than by actual descent in them.

Another explanation, which would remove the difficulties we have alluded to, and may after all be right, is that besides the seven noted manifestations of the Name at the time of the seven special manifestations of the Deity, there were a consecutive series of manifestations of the same, from the commencement of the world; the Name dwelling in the person of the son, or the next divine prophet or apostle on the death or disappearance of the father: the only remark we make in this case being, that some names, such as Ezekiel and Daniel, are sadly out of their chronological order. It will be seen also from the description of the merits of the feast of Nurooz*, that in the Ansairee system there is an indistinct indication of other appearances of the Deity, or Maana, besides the seven noted ones from Abel to Ali.

In that symbolical way through which the Ansairee system represents things in heaven and earth, by human personifications and the converse, Mohammed is considered the personification of Salât or Prayer; some of his family and companions, such as his sons, being used for the same purpose, especially Fatima, Hassan, and Hosein.† There are some doggerel lines ascribed to that great authority Hosein il Khaseebee, to this effect: —

"As Prayer is (represented by) men whose persons are an interpretation (Tâmeel),
Fifty and one persons sanctified with new moons,
Mohammed, then Fatir (Fatima), and the Shibrayn (Hassan and Hosein) the foundations (literally roots),

* Given in Chap. X.

† Pp. 69, &c.; and Catech. q. 100.

All is from them, and with them, they are the true direction and the way.

As likewise Zecât, alms, is the Door Gabriel, his name Salmân, beside him there is no guide to the Apostle." *

Thus we see that the Ansaireeh acknowledge Mohammed, saying that as to his apostleship he was taught and sent by Ali. They also receive the Koran, but allegorise it. In the catechism † the question is asked, "What is the Koran?" And the answer is: "The forerunner of the appearance of our Lord in human form." And again: "Who taught Mohammed the Koran?" Answer: "Our Lord, who is the Maana (meaning), by the mouth of Gabriel." Here again is one of the inconsistencies into which the Ansairee writers could scarcely fail of falling; Gabriel being the first manifestation of Salmân the Bab, and identical with him as we see in the above lines, and also inferior to Mohammed as a director of men to him, is here, in order to accord with the uniform statements of the Koran, made a teacher of Mohammed, or at least a go-between of the Deity and Mohammed.

The Ansaireeh commonly declare that the Mussulmans do not follow Mohammed the apostle, but Mohammed ibn-Haneefa. Now, they either mean by this Mohammed ibn-Hanafeyeh, or more probably allude to Abu-Haneefa (the father, not the son, of Haneefa, who, moreover was not called Mohammed), who was the doctor of the most celebrated of the four orthodox sects of the Soonnah, and that one which is followed by the Mussulmans of Syria. In the same way they say that the Christians do not believe in the true Jesus, but in Jesus-il-Djida, the new, or the young.

The third person in the Trinity is the Bab, or door, who in the time of Adam was Gabriel, and in the time of Ali, Salmân-il-Farisee, the Persian.‡ Another name given to

* MS. p. 73. † Catech. q. 72, 73.

‡ MS. p. 144; and 3d mass of J. Catafago, Germ. Orient. Soc. Jour. vol. ii. "And there is no door, but the lord Salmân-il-Farisee."

him is that of Salsal, which means either a chain (referring, as a name of Salmân, to his being one of a chain of witnesses or apostles), or good wine, or pure water. It is mentioned in connexion with Salsabeel in one passage of my MS., this last being a name of wine, and especially of a fountain in Paradise*, and probably Salsal is used only because of its likeness to Salmân and Salsabeel. In the third mass given by M. Catafago, referred to in the last note, is the expression, "my religion is Salsal."

That Salsal is only another expression for Salmân is evident from the connexion in which it is always used. Thus in one passage† is the expression, "O God, be favourable to our Lord Mohammed and the family of our Lord Mohammed, and to Salsal and the family of Salsal, the lamps of darkness and keys of language." In another passage‡ it is said, "May God cause us and you, O brethren, to drink a draught from the palm of Salsal!"

D'Herbelot says of Salmân §: "Abu-Abdallah Selman-il-Farsi (called also Salman-al-Khair) is the name of a freedman of Mohammed, who was a Persian by nation. It is said that he was a Christian, and that he had read the Scriptures, and travelled much; however, he was of the first and most considerable of the Mussulmans, so that some say of him that he founded Islamism. Abu-Horairah, and Anas ibn-Malek, two persons of great authority in the traditions of Mohammed, received them from Salman, and Salman immediately from Mohammed."

Salmân was in great honour with the followers of Ali; thus Obeidallah, the first of the Fatimite caliphs, is accused of having calumniated the companions and wives of the Prophet, except Ali, son of Abu-Talib, Ammar ibn-Yasir, Salmân-il-Farsi, Al Mikdad ibn-il-Aswad, and Abu-Durr-il-Gifari ‖; the two last being, as we shall hereafter

* MS. p. 45. † P. 138. ‡ MS. p. 134.

§ Bibliot. Orient. article Selman.

‖ Establishment of Fatimite Dynasty in Africa; El Masudi, (Nicholson, Tubingen, 1840,) p. 112.

see, persons conspicuous in the Ansairee system. We have seen, too, that Salmân-il-Farsi, is so highly respected among the Druses that he is made the person in whom Hamza appeared at the time of Mohammed. Probably this position of Salmân with the secret sects is due to some traditional account of his friendship with Ali.

We have seen that the Bab Salmân holds an inferior place to Mohammed the Ism, and that Mohammed is said to have "created the Bab by the command of his Lord, the End and Meaning (Maana)*; and Salmân calls Mohammed, "My most great Lord."†

Ali is spoken of as the "reminder of Salsal" or Salmân, that he may be the teacher of others. Salmân's position is that of the immediate teacher of men, being a guide to the apostle‡, or Mohammed, who again communicates between Salmân and Ali.

We have already given the names of the Bab § at the seven great manifestations of the Deity. As in the case of the Ism there are other designations given to it, such as the "universal soul," the Holy Ghost, Gabriel, &c.‖ One invocation of Ali is by the names of the personifications of the Bab in the Bahman (Persian word for king), Domes, or Periods. Among them are the names Fairooz, Anushirwân, Bahram, Afridoon, and others known in Persian history.⸸

Other names are given of the Bab, such as the titles of chapters of the Koran, as in the case of the Ism; "the faithful soul," names of constellations, Salsal, Salsabecla, &c.** But of these and other names of the Name (such as will, knowledge, power, &c. &c.), and of the Bab, we have had already more than enough.

* MS. p. 111. See also Catech. q. 11, MS. p. 91. † MS. p. 21.
‡ MS. p. 38. Catech. q. 24—29.
§ MS. p. 73. See the lines quoted above.
‖ MS. p. 50. Catech. q. 31.
⸸ MS. p. 50. ** MS. p. 45.

In the Ansairee system, Salmân personifies Zacât or alms, as we have seen in the lines we have already quoted. As Mohammed was the same person with Jesus, &c., so Salmân with Rozaba* and the other preceding Doors.

The twelve imams, of whom Ali is the first and chief, form another part of the Ansairee system.† We have before seen that they are spoken of as the termination of the sixty-three personifications of the Name, and in another passage of my Ansairee book ‡, it is said: "Stablish us in obedience to Thee, and to Thy apostle Mohammed, and to Thy Walee§ Salsal, *and to Thy Names the Imams, who are Thine; Thou hast named Thyself by them; they are not empty of Thee, but Thou art of them.*"

It is thus evident that they are inferior to the Maana, and, when mentioned, they are represented as referring to Ali and teaching obedience to him, and as authorities for parts of the Ansairee religion, of which Ali is the great centre. Thus in one passage of my MS. Djaafar-is-Sadik (one of the most celebrated of the imams, and one who may have had really something to do with the formation and doctrines of the secret sects,) is made to say, "On the naming of me the silence of the speaker is required; and on the mention of God silence and attention."‖

At the same time the imams are spoken of with great respect as divine persons. Thus, on a certain man entering the presence of Hassan il Askeree, the eleventh imam, and chief authority for the Ansairee faith, he is represented as saying that he found him "sitting on a throne of light, before him rays of light, and with a light between his eyes, which filled the east and west. And when I saw him I fell on my face in adoration; then I raised my head and stood praising and thanking my Lord; and I said: —

* MS. p. 51. † MS. p. 142. ‡ MS. p. 22.

§ That is either one of whom God takes care, or who is obedient to God.

‖ MS. p. 179.

my Lord is to be praised and is holy; our Lord is the Lord of the angels and of the spirit."*

Djaafar-is-Sadik is often spoken of† as an authority in matters of faith and practice. So Bakir-il-Ulm‡, or Mohammed the father of Djaafar, who also, as a great student, may have had to do with the system of allegorisation.

Mohammed "the Hudjjah§," or "Thy Hudjjah‖," or demonstration, occupies a conspicuous place among the twelve imams as the Mohdee, who is to come "to make of all religions one sole one⸸," before the appearance of Ali; who, according to the catechism, is to appear once more, "without any transformation, as he is, in pomp and glory."** This man is said by the Mussulmans to have been drowned in the Tigris when twelve years old, and his tomb is shown; but the Imameeh believe that he entered a cave (Sirdthâb) and only disappeared from the eyes of men, to appear at the appointed time."††

To each of these imams, or Isms, there was a Bab, and their names are given in the "eleven appearances," from Ali to Hassan il Askeree, the Bab of whom, as we have seen, was Abu-Schuaib ibn-Nusair, the Ansairee apostle.

Another conspicuous part of the Ansairee system are the Aytâm. These are the second of seven spiritual hierarchies, of which the Doors are the first, and they are generally connected with the Doors; though the series sometimes commences with the Names, thus‡‡, "His Name, His Door, His Aytâm, and the people of His holy hierarchies."

The word *Aytâm*, singular *Yateem*, properly signifies orphans, and hence those disciples who have lost their master. But the word is used in another meaning, as in

* MS. p. 119. † MS. pp. 20, 163, 169. Câtech. 9.
‡ MS. p. 166. § MS. p. 62. ‖ MS. p. 64.
⸸ Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848. Notice on Ansaireeh. ** Q. 7.
†† Abulfeda, vol. v. p. 320 of General History. ‡‡ MS. p. 60.

the expression "id-dura il yateema," the priceless pearl; priceless on account of its rarity; and hence the word is probably used in the Ansairee system, in the meaning, that the orphans or disciples were the choice spirits of their time.

As an Ansairee is required to believe in the chain of divine appearances from Abel to Ali, and in the chain of imams, from the first Hassan to the last, so is he to believe that there always have existed five Aytâm*; five being the consecrated number in this case. Niebuhr gives their names at the seven appearances from Abel to Ali, and they agree most remarkably with those in my Ansairee MS.; there being only such discrepancies as may be accounted for by mistakes made in expressing the Arabic words in French, or by errors of the Ansairee copyists. It is thus clear that the Ansaireeh of to-day have a certain definite system.

The five orphans in the time of Adam, when Gabriel was the Door, were the five angels, Michael, Israfeel, Azraeel, Malik, and Rudwân†, and these are the types of the successive appearances of the Aytâm. Thus it is said, "There are no angels but the five angels, the orphans."‡

The Aytâm are often mentioned in the different books of the Ansaireeh§, generally as those who had been the disciples of the Doors; but the invocation in my MS.‖ is by the twenty-five names of the orphans, five of whom belonged to each of the five persons, Salmân, Mohammed, *our Lord* Fatir (Fatima), and our lady Umur Salamah (a wife of Mohammed), and our lord the Ark (which is the name of the second of the Doors, in the time of the eleven imams). The above is curious because it introduces women, namely, Fatima and Umur Salamah, and their orphans,

* Niebuhr, vol. ii. p. 360. † Niebuhr and MS. p. 47.

‡ Third Mass, J. Catafago.

§ MS. pp. 20, 25, 27, 121. Catech. q. 56—63. Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848.

‖ P. 42. See also Catech. q. 70.

who are all women, and, as we shall see, women have no part nor lot in general in the Ansairee system, so that they make a man of Fatima by clipping her name and calling her "lord."

In one passage *, the five orphans seem referred to as the "five luminous bodies;" and, as we have seen, they form part of seven hierarchies in the world of light, whose names we have already mentioned, and of which we will again speak shortly.

It is reported of Mohammed†, that he declared that "when a congregation of true believers assembled in the east, west, north, or south of the earth, and made mention of God most high, His Name, His Door, His Orphans, His Nakeebs, Nadjeebs, Mukhtassen, Mukhliseen, Mumtahaneen, and all the people of His hierarchies, there was a crier from above, who proclaimed, 'Rise, with your sins forgiven you, and your ill deeds changed into good ones.'"

We have already spoken of these hierarchies and their numbers, and of the earthly degrees of the "honourable species,"—the choice believers. The Ansairee writer not only makes addition sums of the numbers of these spiritual and earthly degrees—119,000 and 5000 respectively,—but takes the trouble also to add together the respective sums, and gives the sum total as 124,000. To such a height of grave absurdity may false teaching come! The most absurd names are given for the forty-nine degrees of the spiritual hierarchies, for which I will refer the curious reader to my note on questions 56—65 of the catechism.

Besides all these hierarchies, an Ansaireeh is required to honour certain apostles, prophets, and great men.

For instance, seventeen prophesiers who appeared in *this* (last) Dome, under the covenant of Lord Mohammed, the greatest of whom is Teid‡, Mohammed's freedman. Also twenty-eight Nadjeebs, excellent ones, of whom the

* P. 68.

† MS. p. 121. Part of these words are from a Mussulman tradition.

‡ MS. p. 33. Catech. q. 69.

greatest is Abdallah ibn-Saba, he who maintained the divinity of Ali during his lifetime*; his name being consequently mentioned in my MS. (p. 152) alone and conspicuously.

There are many other illustrious characters, such as Djaafar Tayyâr, called Bab or Door†, and Malik or king‡, a brother of Ali, whose tomb or visiting-place is at the top of the highest part of the Ansairee range, and is held in special reverence by the people of my own district.

The famous Khadi-il-Akhdar§, or the "green" green, because of his sempiternal youth, and his having made a rod to bud, is also in great favour with the Ansaireeh.

The four brothers of Ali, that they may not be without designation, are called the four supports of the house (the temple at Mecca, spiritually taken), and even Matthew, Paul, Peter (called Butmus, in mistake for Butrus, his usual Arabic name), and St. John Chrysostom (!) have a place in the system as orphans of Rozaba‖, the Door in the time of Jesus, when Peter, under his other name of Shamoon Safa (Simon Cephas) was the Maana, or human form of the Deity.

We have spoken already of the Ansairee sign A. M. S., by which they represent their Trinity, and which is styled their "Uddal" or "arms." It often occurs in their writings ⸸, and on page 68 of my MS. Ali is invoked "by the truth of the A of Ali, the M of Mohammed, and the S of Salsal."

The Ansaireeh suppose that there were five "worlds," that is ages, before that of man, and that during them the world was successively inhabited by five kinds of beings, worshippers of Ali, called the Djann, the Bann, the Tumm, the Ramn, and the Djân (!).**

* MS. p. 37. Catech. q. 66. † MS. p. 41.
‡ MS. p. 107. § MS. p. 107.
‖ MS. p. 48. Catech. q. 29. Victor Langlois, Revue d'Orient. Niebuhr.
⸸ MS. pp. 25, 68, 137, 161. Victor Langlois. Catech. q. 74.
** MS. p. 80. Catech. q. 52.

Another main fact of the Ansairee system is taken from that of the Hindoos, the Sabians, and the Magians. It is the respect paid to light, and the belief in spiritual, higher, luminous worlds.

The Ansaireeh seem to suppose that the divine essence is identical with light, or, if not so, that it is symbolised by it. The letters K. N. represent the word "be" in Arabic, and since this word was used in the creation of light, light is called the secret of God which is concealed between the K and the N.*

In the description of the merits of the feast of Nurooz, given by M. Catafago†, there are these remarkable words. In speaking of the manifestations of the Deity among the Arabs and Persians, it is said: "The Lord, on leaving the Persians, deposited his wisdom with them. He left them well contented with them, and promised to return to them. It is He himself who says: 'The most High had deposited his mystery with you Arabs, and it was among you that He manifested a great work. He destined you for its reception; but you have lost it, while the Persians have preserved it, even after His disappearance by the means of fire and light, in which He manifested Himself.'" Allusion is then made to Moses seeing the burning bush, and not being allowed to approach, to show the sacredness of fire. And then, it is added, "We read in the treatise of Fukh: 'The Persians have consecrated fire, from which they await the manifestation of the Deity. And, in fact, the manifestation will take place among them, for they cease not to keep lighted the fire, from which they look for this same manifestation, and the accomplishment of the promises of the Deity in that event.'"

The wild conceits to be found in the passage from which I have taken the above are probably due to some Persian, and, in fact, one of the divisions of the book where it is to

* MS. p. 35, and Catech. q. 92.
† Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848.

be found is styled "The traditionary sayings of Abu-Ali of Busra, in his dwelling in Shiraz, in the year of the Hijra 327 (A. D. 938).

From this reverence for light, since the sun is the light of lights*, Ali is supposed to reside in the sun † and in the eyes of the sun ‡, from which he is said to appear §; and when they pray, according to the Ansairee catechism‖, they turn their faces towards the sun.

The Jesuit missionaries observe: "When the Ansaireeh are at their prayers, they turn themselves towards the sun; which has led some to say that they adore the sun; but on this point they are not agreed." ⸸

And this leads me to refer again to what I have alluded to in the opening chapter of this book, that the Ansaireeh are divided into two sects, called respectively Shemseeh and Kumreeh, from "shems," the sun, and "kumr," the moon. One of the great distinctions between them, as one might infer from their name, is the different degrees of respect which they pay to these luminaries. But they have other distinctions, and the people of one sect do not learn of the sheikhs of the other. However, the Bagdad sheikh and others have before me smoothed over these differences, saying that their belief was the same, and that they were only two *sects*, not of two religions. The book which I have is of the Shemseeh sect, as also those Ansairee books appear to be which have been hitherto published. The Shemseeh seem to be the oldest and are the strictest sect.

With respect to the sun and moon, I have often heard the Kumreeh say of the Shemseeh, in contempt, "they do

* Catech. q. 95.

† Niebuhr's Ansairee book. Druse book against Nusaireeh. De Sacy.

‡ Catech. q. 82.

§ MS. p. 110, and Niebuhr. ‖ Q. 95.

⸸ Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses, vol i. pp. 361—364.

not *love* the moon." Once my Christian ploughman was working with some of the Kumreeh, when some men of the Shemseeh came up and began arguing with the Kumreeh on the points of difference between them, and let in light on them by the dispute; for in the heat of argument the Shemseeh champions appealed to my servant and said, "Is it right to worship the creature? Should not one worship the Creator only?" basing their argument on the words of the Koran (c. 41, v. 37): "Worship not the moon nor the sun, but worship God who created them;" which passage the Kumreeh allegorise and explain away. It is evident from their books that the Shemseeh reverence the sun, though they do not worship it; while it is certain that the Kumreeh go very far in their respect for both sun and moon, especially the latter. In fact, the Ansairee lad tells me that his people, who are of the Kumreeh sect, are extremely "afraid" of the sun and moon, and pray to them. He says, also, that it is a common thing for the women and children to speak of the moon (which probably looks the greatest to them), as the face of Ali, and the sun, as that of Mohammed.

It is from this reverence for light that spiritual personages are symbolised by such things as the twenty-eight mansions of the moon.*

Among many worlds which are said to be known to God alone, and which form the higher and lower worlds†, are two others, the great and the little world‡; the luminous world or great world of light, and the earthly world.§ For this notion they are ultimately indebted to the Hindoo philosophy.

We now come to a more practical part of the religion of the Ansaireeh — their belief in metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls. This doctrine was adopted from the early religions of the East, by all the secret sects,

* MS. p. 37.
† MS. p. 112.
‡ MS. p. 64.
§ Catech. q. 53—55.

Al Mokannaa being one of the earliest who is said to have taught it. The Ansaireeh held it from the first, and Hamza, the Druse author, directs his anathemas against them, because they carry the doctrine to such an extent as to say "that the souls of the enemies of Ali will pass into dogs, and other unclean brute animals, till they enter fire, to be burnt and beaten under the hammer." After refuting this doctrine of transmigration into animals, he concludes, "and whoever believes in metempsychosis, like the Ansaireeh, the followers of the Maana, in the person of Ali son of Abu-Taleb, and who stands up for it, suffers the loss both of this world and the next." *

Metempsychosis, which is called by Mussulman authors, Tanasukh, is termed by the Ansaireeh Taknees, or Tadjaiyul, that is the coming in successive "djeels" or generations. The Jesuit missionaries say on this point: "The Ansaireeh further admit the metempsychosis, and say that the same soul passes from one body into another, as many as seventy times; but with this difference, that the soul of a good man enters into a body more perfect than his own, and the soul of a vicious man passes into the body of an unclean animal." †

Niebuhr says: "The soul of a devout Ansairee can enter into Paradise, after it has been in only a small number of Hembden (?) (bodies), but the soul of another must have dwelt in eighty Hembden (which is what they term hell). The souls of infidels must pass through five frightful degrees, Fesgh, Nesgh, Mesgh, Wesgh, and Resgh, and after that they must remain in the world as sheep, till the return of Soolra (Zahrah) or Fatima." ‡

With respect to the number of transmigrations, I have heard from the people themselves the same number mentioned as by Niebuhr, while sheikhs have to pass through but few bodies. I have often heard them, when the jackals

* De Sacy, vol. ii. p. 579.
† Lettres Edif. et Cur. vol. i. pp. 361—364.
‡ Travels, vol. ii. p. 360.

began to cry towards dusk, laugh and say: "Those are the Mussulmans calling to afternoon prayer; for the souls of Mussulmans pass into jackals."

Ish-Sharestanee * mentions the names of four degrees of transmigration, called respectively Faskh, Naskh, Maskh, and Raskh, which are like the names quoted by Niebuhr from his Ansairee book.

When the disciple is initiated, one of the threats, if he shall reveal the Ansairee secrets, is, that he will thereby "merit il Musookheyal (the being turned into dreadful forms), and the walking in low envelopes (kamees)." † And if "he shall doubt of the truth of his religion, he will be turned into horrid forms, and be caused to transmigrate again and again, and be tortured in various revolutions." ‡ The terms used here are "kaur" and "daur," which are also used by the Druses. Thus, the title of Hamza's book against the Ansaireeh is: "The epistle destroying the wicked one; the reply to the Nusairee; may the Lord curse him in every kaur and daur!" Which De Sacy § translates, "En tous les tems et dans tous les ages;" kaur and daur referring to returns into the world, and the revolutions of time, and being used with respect to the appearances of Ali in human form, as in Adam, in his kaurs and daurs. ‖

The word kamees (shirt or envelope) we have already referred to as used by the Druses and Ansaireeh, to signify the body, as the envelope of the spirit, the only worthy part of man. Thus, in one passage of my MS. ↓ it is said: "Remember God with a due remembrance, and remember His name, and His door, and His orphans, and all the people of his hierarchies, that they may release you from your graves, and the envelopes of flesh and blood in which you now are."

The invocations in my MS. are, consequently, prayers

* Milah wa Nahal. † MS. p. 165. ‡ MS. p. 166.
§ Vol. i. p. 471. ‖ MS. p. 8. ↓ P. 21.

for the souls of the "brethren," that they may be delivered from Radd and Takrar *, i.e. from frequent transmigrations, over which Ali is said to have the power: and the sheikh who was the transcriber of my MS. represents himself as hoping for deliverance from these. In fact the great fear of the Ansaireeh is of coming again into the world in a state of misery. Though they speak of Wukoof †, or standing before Ali, and pray that it may be happy, and also sometimes speak of a certain last judgment, yet it presents to their minds a different and far less influential idea than to those who, as Christians and Musulmans, believe that it will finally settle the state of all, according to their actions in this world.

With respect to the state of perfect souls, we must first remark that the Ansaireeh believe that souls are but parts of the divine essence ‡, or at least of the essence of light, and hence they think that the stars are perfected souls, and that "every Nusairee, after he has become purified, in passing through different revolutions, by returning into the world and reassuming the dress of humanity, becomes after this purification a star in heaven, which was its first centre." § Hence the prayer that Ali would clothe the brethren in envelopes of light.‖

There are two questions in the catechism bearing on this subject.ǂ "Where do the souls of your brethren, the true believers, go when they leave their graves?" Answer: "To the great world of light."—"What will happen to the godless and polytheists?" Answer: "They will have all torments to suffer in all ages."

The Ansaireeh often support their belief in transmigration by a quotation from the Koran **: "There is no kind of beast on earth, nor fowl which flieth with its wings, but the same is a people like unto you; we have

* MS. p. 76. † P. 114.
‡ Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848.
§ See Druse writing quoted by De Sacy, vol. ii. p. 260.
‖ MS. p. 107. ǂ Q. 80, 81. ** Chap. vi. v. 38.

not omitted anything in the book of our decrees: then unto their Lord shall they return."

I have said that the Ansaireeh do *speak* of a Day of Judgment.* They also use the term Resurrection. This word is coupled with the former in my Ansairee MS.; and in the book of festivals † Iblees is said to have asked for the putting off of his punishment till the "day of resurrection," but that a "shorter period had been granted him, only to the day of the arrival of the Mohdi, who is to punish the infidels, and make all religions merge in one."

It seems from the above that the Ansaireeh expect first a kind of millennium in the world, and then the final settlement of all things, which they speak of under the terms "Day of Judgment" and "Resurrection," which terms with them have only an allegorical meaning.

Burckhardt says that the Ansaireeh "have the curious belief that the soul ought to quit the dying person's body by the mouth; and they are extremely cautious against any accident which they imagine may prevent it taking that road: for this reason, whenever the government of Ladikeeh or Tripoli condemns an Ansairee to death, his relations offer considerable sums that he may be impaled instead of hanged. I can vouch for the truth of this belief." ‡ At all events, it is certain that not long ago Ansaireeh were frequently impaled.

I have often seen in the houses of the Ansaireeh two holes over the door, in order that the departed spirit on leaving the body may not have to meet an evil spirit who might by chance be moving in through a single orifice.

There are things which tend to confirm the Ansaireeh in this belief in transmigration. I suppose most people have at several periods of their life been surrounded by circumstances which have partially recalled former events,

* MS. p. 178. † Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848, p. 166.
‡ Burckhardt, Travels in Syria, p. 156.

so that for a moment they seem doing precisely the same thing, or talking with the same person, as at a certain time past. Now, it is a usual thing for some of the Ansaireeh to fancy this, and that therefore they have already existed in a former generation. And lying comes in to help fancy. It is often reported that at such and such a day and hour a person died in one village, and another was born at another place, and that this latter on growing up could remember distinctly what he did before he died, when in the form of the man who deceased on the day of his birth. I have heard of one Christian woman who pretends that she was an Ansairee in a former age, and professes to describe what she then did; and of another woman who pretends that she has already been in seven forms. It is further asserted that she went to a village where she had lived in a previous state, and showed the people where they could find water by digging; and that on digging the water was found. One man, who is a curer of serpent bites, gravely speaks of having been so in all former generations.* It is by these lies that argument is stopped; for, as I have often assured the people, though great liars they will believe any lie, but disbelieve any one when he tells the truth. It is a common thing to suppose that a Frank traveller is looking after treasures hidden when he and his ancestors were in the country.

The Ansaireeh not only acknowledge the Tawrah (Old Testament or Law), Andjeel (Gospel), Zuboor (Psalms), and Koran, but speak in all of 114 books†, among which they include those of "Seth, Idrees (Enoch), Noah, and Abraham, in the Syriac."‡ In this they exceed the Mussulman calculation, who reckon only 104, of which ten were sent down to Adam, fifty to Seth, thirty to Idrees, and

* When it is asked why *all* souls do not remember what happened to them in a former state, the answer is, because some are plunged in Jordan up to their necks, and consequently forget their previous condition.

† MS. p. 40. Catech. q. 71.

‡ MS. p. 85.

ten to Abraham.* These books were appealed to by the Sabians†; and a book attributed to Enoch is still to be found, and has been translated in England. The Mussulmans have an apocryphal gospel of St. Barnabas‡; and I have seen portions of an apocryphal gospel among the Ansaireeh.§

Before I conclude this chapter I will refer to a few accounts of the Ansairee religion, given by various authors of very early dates, to show that the Ansairee religion is pretty well now what it always was. But first I would account for this by mentioning that the Ansaireeh have some books in their possession; though the late Dr. Eli Smith did not think they had many, as an early Druse author asserts that they had in his time. Several are alluded to in my Ansairee MS., some of which at least have not yet fallen into the hands of Europeans. A certain Aboo-Saeed was one of their chief authors, and two books of his, "Ir-Radd Ala-il-Murtadd‖" and "Il Kitab-il-Ilawi Ala Ulm-il-Fetawi⸸," are mentioned in the body of my MS., and their names entered on a fly-leaf, as if the owner had made a note of them, that he might remember to obtain copies. These same books have their titles given by Dr. Wolff in the Journal of the German Oriental Society**, apparently as referred to in the Ansairee catechism; as also another of the same author, which is described by M. Catafago in the Journal Asiatique.††

Another author is the apostle Il Khaseebee, one of whose treatises bears a Persian name, Rastabasheych, of which, as far as I can make out, the meaning is, "Chiefs of a Series;" and it is in such honour as to be mentioned more than once in my MS., Ali being invoked by the truth of

* Taylor, p. 105. Sale's Introd. to Koran, p. 52.
† Gibbon, ch. iv. ‡ Sale, p. 53.
§ Ansaireeh and Ismaeleeh, p. 138. ‖ Answer to the Backslider
⸸ Book containing the knowledge of the Fetwas, or decisions of doctors of religion.
** Vol. iii. p. 302, &c. at end. †† Feb. 1848.

it.* Many Khutbehs of Ali are referred to, but apparently all are not in writing; for, in one instance, a saying is quoted from "Khubbat-il-Cashf, and some say Khubbat-il-Bayân," as if the tradition were merely oral. Another book, Il Hadâyah, the title of which is given by Dr. Wolff, is also mentioned in my MS.† as written by Il Khaseebee.

The various MSS. that have fallen into the hands of Europeans show that there are books among the Ansaireeh, and that these, moreover, agree in all main points. There is, as might be expected from the present state of the people, an utter want among them of grammatical knowledge, and accordingly their books are full of mistakes, some of which have probably crept in as each successive copy was made; but they are in general capable of explanation, and after a little practice, and knowledge of the present language of the people, easily rectified.

We proceed to give some statements with respect to the Ansaireeh of old.

Abulfaradj (A.D. 1226—1286) says of them‡:—"Among the extravagant sects of the Schiites are the Nusaireeh, who say that God Most High appeared in the form of Ali, and spoke by his tongue with reference to the inner meaning of mysteries!"

D'Herbelot, who drew his materials from various Oriental sources, says of the *Nossairioun* §:—"This also is the name of a particular sect of the Schiites, or followers of Ali among the Mussulmans, who believe that the divinity joined and united itself to certain of their prophets, and particularly to Ali, and to Mohammed son of Hanifieh, one of his children. For the people of this sect believe that the divinity can unite itself bodily with men and human nature, equally as with the Deity. This doctrine is reprobated by Mussulman authors, who reproach the Ansaireeh with having drawn it from the books

* P. 17. † P. 84. ‡ Hist. Dynast. p. 169. § Bibl. Orient.

of the Christians." As to what he says of Mohammed son of Hanafeyeh, he was probably led astray by the supposed quotation from a Karmatian book ascribed by Abulfaraj to the founder of the Ansaireeh.

Sharestani (quoted by Pococke) * says of the Ansaireeh, that they hold "a spiritual appearance in a material body;" and assert that "God Most High appeared in the form of persons; and since, after the apostle of God, there is no person more illustrious than Ali, and after him his sons, the chief of mortals, therefore the Truth appeared in their form, and spake by their tongue, and handled with their hands, and for this they ascribed divinity to them." They also narrated many miracles of Ali; among others, that he removed the gates of Khaibar (as the Ansaireeh often mention in the present day), and that "to prove that a particle of Deity and almighty power resided in him."

They also said that not only did God appear as above in the form of Ali, "but that he (Ali) existed before the creation of heaven and earth," which is similar to the belief of the Druses with respect to the preexistence of the humanity of Hakem.

I will close my list of citations, in proof of my assertion that the Ansairee religion of to-day is what it always was, with the following passage from an early Druse writer. In the Druse catechism is this question †: "How have the Nusaireeh separated themselves from the Unitarians, and abandoned the Unitarian religion?" Answer: "They have separated themselves in following the teaching of Nusair, who said that he was the servant of our Lord, the prince of true believers; who denied the divinity of our Lord Hakem, and made profession of believing in the divinity of Ali, son of Abu-Taleb. He said also that the Deity had manifested himself successively in the

* Spec. Hist. Arab. p. 261 : ed. White, Oxf. 1806.
† Question 44. See De Lacy, vol. ii. p. 260.

twelve imams of the family of the prophet; that he had disappeared, after having manifested himself in Mohammed the Mohdi, the Kaim (the twelfth and last imam); that he had concealed himself in heaven; and that, being enveloped in a blue mantle, he had fixed his abode in the sun. He said, also, that every Ansaireeh, when he had been sufficiently purified in passing through different revolutions, by returning into the world and reassuming the garment of humanity, became after that purification a star in heaven, which was his first centre. If, on the contrary, he had rendered himself guilty of sin by transgressing the commandments of Ali, son of Abu-Taleb, the supreme lord, he returned into the world as Jew, Mussulman Sunnee, or Christian, which return would be reiterated till he had become purified like silver purified by lead, and that then he would become a star in heaven. As to infidels, who do not adore Ali, son of Abu-Taleb, they will become camels, mules, donkeys, dogs, sheep destined for slaughter, and other similar things. They have many other dogmas, and a great number of impious books, which treat of like matters."

CHAP. VI.

RELIGIOUS SYSTEM OF THE ANSAIREEH.

II. *Practice or Ceremonies.*

THE prayers of the Ansaireeh are rather invocations than petitions. An instance here taken at random from my MS. is a type of all the others:* — "In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The words of the Most High. He has said: Never do my friends sit together, and make mention of me, but my mercy covers them, and I make mention of them to those with me; therefore frequently make mention of me, for the mention of me obliterates faults, and it is a remembrance to those who make mention. O God, I ask thee, my Lord, by the truth of this section of making mention, and by the truth of thy shining grace, and by the truth of thy soul that gives commands, and by the truth of thy overcoming power, and by the truth of thy seeing eye, and by the truth of thy noted demonstration, and by the truth of thy overflowing seas, and by the truth of thy sounding thunders, and by the truth of thy rainy clouds, and by the truth of the preeminence of thy strength and the strength of thy strength, O prince of bees [true believers], O Ali, O Haiderah [lion], O crown of the Chosroes line, O chief of this world and the next! May God cause to descend [oftener, 'cause to abound as with milk'] in your habitations blessing and mercy and happiness, O pos-

* P. 22.

sessors of this wealth and this favour, and this generosity and this subject for boasting, and this goodness and this present table; and turn from us and from you the ills of the violent men, the sons of Omeyah [the Omeyade caliphs of Syria, enemies of the house of Ali], the overbearing, the unjust, the infidels; and sanctify and have mercy on the spirits of our brethren, the true believers, in their good, pure soul, O prince of bees, O lofty one [Ali], O great one!"

This is, in the main, the termination of every Ansairee invocation. My Ansairee lad has often heard the sheikhs make use of this and similar invocations after having partaken of a feast at one of the people's houses. He has also heard his people repeat very quickly the names of Ali, the visiting-places, &c., saying after every ten or so, "May the mercy of God be upon them!" Afterwards they will sing what they call Mawali, of which the following is a specimen: —

> "By the truth of Him who without hands created the Virgin Mary, Mohammed is my intercessor, and Ali is the End of Ends."

M. Langlois says: "With respect to external worship, the Ansaireeh have prayers which they recite three times a day, and in the open air, the most important is made at the rising of the sun. They turn towards the east like the Mussulmans, from whom they have borrowed ablutions and circumcision." *

My lad tells me that before sunrise the people get up and wash; and then, either rising or sitting, inside the house or walking to and fro outside, they repeat in a low voice, rapidly and unintelligibly, their prayers, which some of them omit for a month together, and sometimes continue for an hour at a time, ending with a chant. Not long ago some sheikhs were in his house, they got up long before light, and after washing and walking about a little

* Revue d'Orient, Juin, 1856.

outside, reciting their prayers, entered the house, and for more than an hour continued them, till near the rising of the sun. They prayed also at noon, and again for an hour or so before sunset. When sheikhs are in a quarter of a village, they will sometimes assemble the people to prayer. We have seen that the whole number of their daily prostrations is to be fifty-one, but these Rakaah they do not employ, except at their secret meetings; and the morning, or that and the evening, are the only usual times of prayer. Morning prayer is considered especially good. The presence of a Mussulman does not make their prayers void, but the appearance of a Christian within forty feet, unless running water be between, does. My Christian ploughman once, after finishing his day's work in the plain, went to place his plough in a house in a neighbouring village. When seen, the master was in a great rage, for in a neighbouring house were some sheikhs at prayer, whom my man could see through the chinks of the door. In fact there was a feast there that day, and the above man said that he would have given ever so much for the ploughman not to have made his appearance. My Christian servants have often seen them, in the early morning, praying in the open air, and moving their heads or lips, but their appearance was always sufficient to stop the worshipper. A part of their worship is a curse against "Abu-Beer, Omar, Othmân ibn-Uffân, and Sheikh it-Tarkomân."

In my MS. a form is given for the morning and evening prayer of every Ansairee. A certain Yahya is said to have entered the presence of Hassan il Askeree, the eleventh imam, and to have asked him: "My Lord, what ought your servant, a true believer, one well instructed, who looks into the truth of things, who is particular in matters of religion, to do, every day and night, and morning and evening?" So he said: "O Yahya! Such a servant of mine, every day and night, and morning and evening, ought to turn to the right and left [as my

servants have seen them do], and if he finds a brother of his brethren, or a friend of his friends, he ought to shake hands with him." "And," says Yahya, "I said: My Lord, and if he does not find a brother of his brethren, nor friend of his friends?" He said: "Let him shake hands with himself, and meditate on himself, by himself; and let him take the Lord Mikdâd on the right, by the love of Ain, Meem, Seen, and the Lord Abu-id-Durr on the left, by the love of the perfect one, and rise and say: 'He is successful and fortunate who begins morning and evening with, and indicates and enters into, the knowledge of my Lord, the prince of bees, Ali, Haiderah [the lion] il-Anzaa [without hair on temples, a mark of beauty], the preponderating, the beautiful; and he is successful and exalted who has laid hold of the firm cord which shall not be broken, for God is the hearing and the seeing One.'"* This last sentence is from the Koran (ii. 257).

It is necessary to explain two or three things in this prayer, if such it can be called. The Aín, Meem, Seen, we have observed, stand for Ali, Mohammed, and Salmân; and the perfect one, which is feminine and relates to a woman, is I suppose, Fatima, or rather Umur Salamah, a wife of the Prophet, noted for her bounty, and said in another passage to "indicate by her nearness (to the Prophet) the appearances of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab."†

Mikdâd and Abu-Durr were two noted companions of Mohammed. My boy has heard the name of the former often mentioned, and they were in honour with the secret sects, and especially so with the Ansaireeh, who, in their system of symbolisation, make them the "right" and "left" of prayer; as we learn also from the third mass of M. J. Catafago, where is the passage: "The prayer" (called that of calling to prayer) "is now completed according to *its lords*. O God, my Lord! O Ali! I pray thee to support it, and cause it to endure while heaven and earth endure,

* MS. p. 119. † MS. p. 40.

and make the lord Mohammed its Seal (or conclusion), and the lord Salmân its Alms, and Mikdâd its right, and Abu-id-Durr its left." In the prayers of consecration, &c., those standing on the right and left of the imam having a special office. I would say, by the way, that in this prayer is the expression, "Haiyoo Ala Khair-il-Amal," "Come to the best of works," which was substituted by the Ismaeleeh and Fatimite caliphs for the usual passage in the call to prayer, "Haiyoo Ala-id-Salâh," "Come to prayer."

The Mikdâd referred to above was a certain Ibn-Omar ibn-Othman ibn-il-Aswad il Kindee, one of the chief "orphans" of Salmân. He was present with the Prophet in all the engagements subsequent to the battle of Bedr, and died A.H. 34.

Abu-id-Durr Djundub ibn-Djenada il Yhifaree is another of the chief orphans of Salmân. "He protested so warmly against Moawiya's avaricious conduct in the government of Syria, that the latter wrote to Othman complaining of it, upon which the caliph removed him to Mabda, where he died." * Taylor says of him: "Abu-Durr, an old companion of the Prophet, misrepresenting some passages of the Koran, declared that the riches of this world were the source of every crime, and that the wealthy should be compelled by force to give their superfluities to the poor." †

It is evident that the Ansaireeh hold these men in such honour as being conspicuous friends of Ali, just as they do also another companion of Mohammed, a certain Ammar ibn-Yasir, who died fighting for Ali at Suffayn, A.H. 37.

We have seen that the Ansairee books speak of fifty-one Rakaah, or prostrations, during the day, these Rakaah including all the prayers, bowings, and genuflexions are contained in one complete prayer. Two such Rakaah are

* Abulfeda, Annales Muslm, i. 272 and 260, cited by Nicholson on El Masudi, p. 112.

† P. 137.

necessary at every act of worship, except that of an hour and a half after sunset. On reading the Rakaah mentioned in my MS. with a Mussulman sheikh, I find that they agree pretty well with those of the Mussulmans; which are nominally fifty, at five different times; daybreak, noon, afternoon, evening, and an hour and a half after sunset, the very devout using also prayers in the night.* The difference is that the Ansaireeh personify these times of prayer by the names of persons, and thus allegorise them away, for they do not pray at all these times, nor usually prostrate themselves at any.

We have now, at length, to consider the most important part of the Ansairee religion, or at least of the ceremonial part of it,—the great mystery, the secret of secrets, the consecration of wine in a mass or sacrament. And we cannot introduce what we have to say better than by quoting the passages in the Ansairee catechism† referring to it:—

Question. "What is the mass?" (Kuddâs.)

Answer. "The consecration of the wine which is drunk to the health of the Naheeb or Nadjeeb."

Q. "What is the offering?" (Kurbân.)—*A.* "The consecration of the bread which the true believers receive for the souls of their brethren; and on that account the mass is read."

Q. "Who reads the mass and brings the offering?"—*A.* "Your great imams and preachers."

Q. "What is the great mystery of God?"—*A.* "The Flesh and the Blood, of which Jesus has said, 'This is my flesh and my blood; eat and drink thereof, for it is eternal life.'"

Q. "What is the mystery of the faith of the Unitarians; what is the secret of secrets, and chief article of the true

* My sheikh informed me that they might become about fifty; but Lane, who is so accurate in all he says, makes the usual number to be but thirty-eight. Modern Egyptians, vol. i. p. 107, note.

† Q. 76, 77, 78, 79, 82, 87, 88, 90, 91, 94.

believers?"—*A.* "It is the veiling of our Lord in light, that is in the eye of the sun, and his manifestation in his servant Abd in Noor."

Q. "What is the first mass?"—*A.* "It is that which is spoken before the prayer of Nurooz."

Q. "What is the prayer of Nurooz?"—*A.* "It is the consecration of the wine in the chalice."

Q. "What is the consecrated wine called which the believers drink?"—*A.* "Abd in Noor." (Servant of light.)

Q. "Wherefore so?"—*A.* "Because God has manifested himself in the same."

Q. "If our Lord has concealed himself in light, where does he manifest himself?"—*A.* "In the wine, as is said in the Nurooz."

From the above it is clear that the Ansairech have taken their sacrament from Christianity. It is also clear, and certain, that the wine is the chief ingredient in it, though mention is also made of an "offering," and the Jesuit missionaries, whose account cannot be implicitly relied upon, speak of a piece of meat as forming part of the sacrament. They say: "The Ansairech have borrowed from Christianity the communion, but the mode in which they practise it is perfectly fanatical; for they celebrate it with wine and a morsel of meat." I have not, however, found bread or meat in any Ansairee MS., though the prayers of consecration are given in full, and I find allusions to the wine scattered about in other parts of the book.* Thus the brethren are called "possessors of this sarf," or "pure wine," † and "this naheed, or wine." ‡ It is the wine, too, which is especially referred to in the catechism as the Abd in Noor, or servant of light, because the light, or Deity, manifests himself peculiarly in it,

* The word Kurbân, or offering, is once used at the close of one of the prayers. MS. p. 18. M. Catafago, apparently on the authority of Ansairee books, speaks of "eating and drinking" and the consecration of the same.

† MS. p. 32. ‡ MS. p. 47.

and in it is partaken of by the brethren.* Under this name, too, it is mentioned in my MS. as being the only thing which the officiating sheikh consecrates †, and in another passage ‡, in these terms: "O God, this thy servant, Abd in Noor, is a person whom thou hast rendered lawful, and honoured, and favoured, for those who have the true knowledge, by a determinate command, and hast rendered unlawful to thy gainsaying infidel enemies, by a manifest denial." The Ansaireeh, therefore, generally do not like to speak of wine, and are annoyed if it is spoken of, for they look on it as sacred, and belonging only to themselves. Wine is also mentioned under the same name Abd in Noor, in the second mass given by M. J. Catafago, where allusion is made to its being "incensed," the mass being called that of "incense."

A certain sheikh, Hassan il Cananee, the best-informed of all the Ansairee sheikhs that I have met with, and also the most reprobate and deceitful, who had then his son in my school, spoke to me of the time when the boy was to become a Christian, and said, "Will not wine be necessary for his initiation?" and intimated that he had the power of consecrating wine.

I have given in another chapter an entire translation of the service of the mass, and will only make here one important remark, that, as far as I can judge from the references made to the mass in that partial translation which I have seen of the Ansairee catechism, in which some of the chief expressions are quoted, the service given in the catechism and in my book are identical in words and arrangement.

This great secret of the mass is only administered in the presence of the initiated of the male part of the Ansairee sect. Great precautions are taken against the possibility of this their religious service being seen; and it is probable that if a stranger were known to have been a

* See opening of Catechism, Chap. X. † MS. 133. ‡ 134.

witness to it, accidentally or otherwise, he would be made away with, if possible. But such are the precautions taken, by placing watchmen, and choosing times and places where there is little chance of interruption, that scarcely ever has any one been an absolute witness of their rites. Two of my Christian servants were brought up in the district of Merkab, in villages partly Christian and partly Ansairee. The father of one of them was well acquainted with the customs of the Ansaireeh. Five times during the year, at the time of their chief feasts, the father and son were obliged to leave the Ansairee quarter of the village in which they were living, while the Ansaireeh entered a house belonging to the visiting place in winter, or went into the open country in summer. My other servant has told me that once, when present in a district of the Shemseen sect, he was made to go up into a room raised above the earth on poles, and constructed of myrtle boughs, the women being put into a house, while the men went into a valley, where he could see them from the tent, and where a sheikh read to them.

I was once told by the Spanish consular agent at Ladikeeh, that an old man, who had died about five years before the time of our conversation, had once been witness, at a village in the plains, of one of these secret religious meetings. He was an overseer of the village, and, coming there unexpectedly, concealed himself in a room full of chopped straw. From this he could look into the sheikh's house, in which a number of men were assembled round a large bowl of wine, with candles affixed to its circumference, or, perhaps, placed about it. The sheikh read some prayers. They then cursed Abu-Beer, Omar, Othmân ibn-Uffân, and Sheikh it-Turcomân, and others (he said Christians among them), and that then he gave a spoonful of wine, first to the sheikhs present, and afterwards to all the rest. Oranges were then eaten, other prayers said, and the assembly broken up.

These assemblies take place at the chief feasts, especially at that of Nurooz, the Persian name for the vernal equinox. Women and children are strictly excluded. M. Langlois says: "On the days of the principal feasts, the Ansaireeh assemble, and the sheikhs bless wine, which they distribute to the company. These feasts are called Eed Kuddâs, feasts of the mass." The Jesuit missionaries say: "They admit only men to the communion, excluding women and children. It is in their secret assemblies that the men observe this practice among themselves."

My lad informs me that when a feast is made on the occasion of a Nidr (that is, a vow to kill such and such beasts for a religious feast, to be partaken of by the sheikhs or others), the men make what is called a Djamaa, or assembly, in some house or lonely place surrounded by watchers.* It is absurd to suppose that on such occasions, and these are the only ones which have given and can give, as I shall show, rise to suspicion and foolish stories; it is absurd, I say, to suppose that anything takes place, but what we have described from their books and other sources.

One thing to be remarked is that the wine in the sacrament is mixed with water, after the manner of the Eastern churches.

When the men go to a solemn meeting, they wear their shirts over their drawers, turn down the heels of their shoes, and leave their weapons at home. My lad has often seen them thus going and returning. There are some other regulations and prohibitions connected with the dress and bearing of those who attend a meeting, for which I refer to the sermon they pronounce, of which I have given a translation in Chapter IX.

Such are the theoretical and ceremonial parts of the religion of the Ansairee brotherhood. Before I proceed

* He has seen them also go to a quiet valley or other lonely place.

to speak of the other parts of their freemasonic constitution, the commands and prohibitions to which they are subject, and their conventional signs of recognition, I will, from the information I have received from my Ansairee lad and others, and from the formulas in their books, give an account of the process of initiation into the knowledge of, and participation in, the mysteries of the sect.

With the Ansaireeh, unlike the Druses, all the males are initiated. This is usually done when a lad is about eighteen or twenty, before marriage; and, in the case of the sons of sheikhs, about sixteen. It is known when a boy is to be initiated, and the women and children make it a subject of conversation, and laugh at the boy, frightening him with the idea of the beatings he will have, before he can learn the requisite prayers. When young, my lad did all he could to make his future initiation easy to himself, by spying as far as possible into what was done on such occasions, from fear of what he might otherwise have to undergo.

When a lad is to be initiated, he buys a kid or some other animal, as a dabechah or sacrifice; and in the evening of some day, especially at a time of one of the great feasts or when another "vow" is celebrated, the sheikhs come, and, with the boy's anna, uncle or private instructor, who may be one of the laity (who are called Aâmees, in contradistinction to the Ukkal, sheikhs or religious teachers), partake of the sacrifice or slain beast. My lad, when young, looked through the chinks of a door where this was going on, and saw the men standing round a vessel in which was incense. He has been told that the boy passes behind his uncle into the middle of this circle. Those composing it teach him words, and, if he makes a mistake, cuff him. A contract is written between the uncle and his walad, or "son," of which I shall give a translation in Chapter IX. After that they "*dish*" him (that is, let him loose like a lamb after his mother) "be-

hind" his uncle. For thirty days or more the boy learns from his "uncle," until he knows a sufficiency of the prayers, when, on the occurrence of another Nidr, or feast in consequence of a vow, the opportunity is taken of completing the initiation of the boy according to a set formula, of which I shall give a translation in the chapter devoted to that purpose. I will say again, in passing, that this formula, taken from my MS., seems to be identical with that contained in the catechism.

The instruction takes place in the open air. The first process is called Mudakhileh, "initiation," and also "the carpet of (or entrance to) the prayer," "besât is-salah;" and the second, "Ulm," "knowledge," and the "prayer." Those who learn of the same uncle are called of the same Nebaa, or fountain, and are bound together by special ties. Thus the freemasonry spreads like leaven through the whole body of adult males.

My lad used to be told, when disciples were learning the prayers, that he would be smitten with deafness if he listened, and was thus deterred by fear from doing so. Some of the poorer sort, who have no friends to think much about them, sometimes marry before initiation. In that case they remain separate from their wives while learning the prayers. They make use of raisins at one of these ceremonies, either for extracting wine or other purpose. Lately, when a Nidr took place on the occasion of the initiation of a lad (who was, in fact, almost a man in appearance), the people bought of my lad some raisins. Raisins were among the things the sale of which was interdicted by Hakem, the Ismaelee caliph of Egypt. These raisins are called nakfeh, or rather the juice pressed out of them in water is so called. Myrtle is put round the bowl in which it is contained, and my boy thinks the juice may be used when wine cannot be got. M. Victor Langlois says:* "The religion of the Nusaireeh is all a mystery;

* Revue d'Orient, Juin, 1856.

only men are initiated. Children are only initiated after they have attained the age of puberty, and after having been prepared by the sheikh, so as to preserve silence on the mysteries which are revealed to them. The ceremony of initiation (Tazneer) [putting on a girdle, the boy being said to Tazunnar, or have a girdle put on, when initiated], takes place in the presence of two godfathers. The secret which forms the basis of their religion, and which is not written in any of their books, is revealed orally to the initiated, and is called the mystery of the two (Sirr it-Tinateyn)."

There are some mistakes in this statement. The secret which forms the basis of their religion is, theoretically, without any doubt, the manifestation of the Deity in Ali, with the accompanying dogmas; and, ceremonially, the sacrament, or manifestation of the Deity in the consecrated wine. All other secrets, such as conventional signs, are only accessories in the Ansairee system.

Moreover with respect to the two godfathers, and the "mystery of the two," the formula of initiation given in my MS. terminates thus:—"Then he, the sheikh, shall surrender to his *ten* brethren and the Kufaleh [sureties], who shall swear him, and then to the Nakeeb [chief, a name used in the Ansairee system], his lord [that is, the boy's uncle or instructor], who shall make him drink the secret or mystery of the two [Sirr it-Tinateyn], after he, the sheikh, has read them [the two masses probably], and after the Imam [officiating sheikh, leader of the prayers] has read a verse from the Koran, and they have bent in adoration and prayed while adoring, and that is all. And he shall read the Fatihah [opening chapter of the Koran] to the people of the Way, and to the people of the Truth, as shall be convenient, and then the blessed entrance [into all the privileges and duties of the brotherhood]."

We see that this secret is accomplished or revealed in the presence of many, among others, *ten* not *two* sureties or godfathers, and the disciple is caused to drink the

mystery before all present, and therefore doubtless this mystery is none other than the consecrated wine.

By looking at the translation of the formula of initiation, it will be seen that the endeavour is made to terrify the lad by a number of words and threats strung together, and by the fear of being turned into horrid shapes, and of passing through mean bodies, &c. He is then bound by solemn oaths, and, whatever may be the reason, certainly no Ansairee has ever revealed his religion.

We come now to a part of the Ansairee system which is interesting on account of its connexion with the modern mystery of freemasonry. I call it "modern," not because I pretend to say when it arose, but because it is still in existence. I leave it to freemasons to say whether their brotherhood contains anything of importance which is not found in that of the Ansaireeh.

"The Ansaireeh," says M. Victor Langlois*, "have conventional signs, of which they make use to recognise one another." Mr. Walpole is acquainted with many, if not most, of these, and once taught me some of them, but as I do not know whether he intends some day to give his information on this and other points to the public, I forbear speaking of them, and content myself with quoting what he himself has already published:—"The Ansayrii have signs and questions. By the one they salute each other, by the other they commence an examination as to whether a man, whom they do not know personally, is one of them or not. But these signs are little used, and are known only to a few; as the dress clearly indicates them to each other, and almost each one knows all the chiefs, at least by sight."† In their books they use the double interlacing triangle or seal of Solomon.

The members of the Ansairee society are called Ukhwân-

* Revue d'Orient. Juin, 1856.

† Ansayrii, or Assassins, vol. iii. p. 354.

or brethren. All that is said about doing good or refraining from doing harm refers to these favoured individuals. So little have those without the pale of the society, the doubting and polytheists, any part or lot in the matter, that there is even a prayer in my MS.* that "God may take out of their hearts" what little "light of knowledge and certainty" they may possess. And the conduct of the Ansaireeh, in robbing and murdering without compunction Mussulmans and Christians, shows the effect of a system which, however benevolent to the initiated, at the same time excludes all others from its benefits. Can the system of freemasonry be right which acts on this exclusive principle, when Christianity already exists which teaches that "all *ye* are brethren," and therefore supplies all that freemasonry can properly bestow? If it be said that freemasonry is more expansive as linking together members of different religions, the answer is, that this is a defect rather than a thing deserving of praise. A Christian is charitable to all, and in this sense considers all men as brethren, while he can admit none to the full dignity of brotherhood who does not recognise and love the elder Brother.

Freemasonry has been made use of for political and bad purposes, as all secret societies are liable to be. "The Royal Arch degree in that institution was originally devised by some Scotch Jacobites, as a means of holding together the partisans of the Pretender. From the place where they resided, the new degree was called, 'The Royal Arras,' and meetings of its members 'Royal Arras Chapters;' when the cause of the Pretender became hopeless, the new degree merged in the general system, and by an easy corruption its name was changed into that of the 'Royal Arch.'"†

Allusions are, even now, sometimes made to certain dark degrees of freemasonry; but, supposing there is in

* P. 138. † Taylor, p. 176.

it nothing hurtful, is not the institution with all its parade childish, for does it enjoin anything better than the practical duties of Christianity, or even than those of the Ansairee system, which duties are limited, as we have seen, to a freemasonic brotherhood?

The duties are contained in two principal precepts. At the time of initiation a lad is informed that two things are required of him, obedience to a command and observance of a prohibition. The command is, that he should "guard, and be attentive to, and take care of his brethren, and be constant in visiting them and defending their character, and in intercourse with them; and that everything *that he should desire for himself, he should desire for them;*" and it is added, "that *one fifth of his property every year becomes their due.*" * The prohibition is "against being unjust to, or injuring his brethren, and against proclaiming their failings, or doing anything to displease or hurt them. Because every calamity would befall him should he injure them in their honour, or listen to backbiting and scandal about them, or make light of them, or be covetous with regard to them." The lad is also to avoid lying and every kind of wickedness and reprobate conduct, secret or open.

Nothing can be better, moreover, than some of the precepts and ideas to be found in the sermon already alluded to. It would be well if the Ansaireeh attended to them with respect to their brethren, and extended the observance of them to all men; but unfortunately they do neither the one nor the other. True, some of the sheikhs and people, of the Shemseen sect especially, living on the higher mountains, seem to be simple-minded men, who take some of these rules as their guide, but they complain with reason that the majority of their fraternity treat them as a dead letter.

Von Hammer alludes to the connexion between the

* Mussulmans have to give a fourth of the tenth part of their property every year in obligatory alms. Lane, i. 130.

Assassins or Ismaeleeh and Templars. He says that there is an analogy between the constitution of the Assassins and those of some modern orders; and that "many points of similarity are found, which can neither be accidental, nor yet spring from the same cause." He mentions one instance of accordance, that between the white dresses and red fillets of the Assassins, and the white mantle and red cross of the Templars; and the Ansaireeh of the present day mostly dress in white, while they are also fond of red jackets and red handkerchiefs, or of red and white mixed. We have already alluded to the fact that the Templars dwelt in the immediate neighbourhood of and among these secret sects, while, as is known, a degree of freemasonry is called that of the Templars. With these remarks we will leave the subject to those who are, or consider themselves to be, acquainted with the history of the freemasonic body.

CHAP. VII.

CUSTOMS OF THE ANSAIREEH.

We have thus described the theoretical and ceremonial parts of the Ansairee religion. But it is with the Ansaireeh as with people of all other religions, especially with those who are in a semi-barbarous state, religious theory has little to do with the direction of their lives; and a description of their theological system gives but an imperfect idea of their state as affected by religion. Something more palpable and visible is found to be the moving principle, the active influence, in the case of the great mass of the people; and among the Ansaireeh, but for this popular belief and the customs which in most countries have a semi-religious character, such as those connected with marriage, death, &c., the women and children would be absolutely without religion.

With respect to their opinion about women, there is a great difference between the Druses and the Ansaireeh. With the former some women are initiated into the highest secrets, while the majority of men are excluded; but, with the latter, women are entirely excluded from any participation in religious ceremonies and prayers, and from all religious teaching; and that, not only because females are considered, as elsewhere, inclined to reveal a secret, but because they are considered by the Ansaireeh as something unclean. Many stories are told of their original wickedness, and of the faithlessness of those of the present day, by men who do not reflect that it is their own treatment and contempt of women which leave them such as they are. However, as the Ansaireeh believe that

the soul of a brute may have in a former state animated a wicked man, so they suppose that a man may be punished for his sins in a previous generation by being born in a woman's form in the succeeding one; so that, commonly, if a woman fulfils all the duties of which she is capable, well and virtuously, there is hope of her again coming into the world as a man, and becoming one of the illuminati and possessors of the secret. And as no one can remain without some form of religion, and women are naturally more religiously inclined than men, the Ansairee women are more fearful perhaps even than the men of bringing on themselves the ill-will of those whom they most fear,—the holy men of former times, who have tombs and visiting-places in every part of the mountains.

This brings me to speak of the zeyârehs or visiting-places; and it is proper to do so at the commencement of this chapter on the customs of the Ansaireeh; for of all things which exercise a practical, religious, or rather superstitious, influence on them, the zeyârehs are, without comparison, the most powerful. Nearly all good is looked for from them, and all ill dreaded from their displeasure.

The word "zeyâreh" properly means "a visiting," and hence is used for the place visited, being the appellation given to the reputed sepulchres of men who have enjoyed distinction in the Ansairee sect. These tombs are generally situated on conspicuous spots, such as the tops of the highest hills, or amid groves of evergreen oak. They recal to mind in a very striking manner the worship of the ancient Canaanites, on every high hill and under every green tree. Many of these groves are doubtless very old, perhaps as old as the Canaanites. The tombs found under them are often very apocryphal; for instance, about a quarter of a mile to the west of my village is a fine grove of trees, in which are sixteen small tombs enclosed by a rude wall, in which I have before now seen snakes, a fit emblem of that old serpent who still deceives the dark Ansairee mountains, where he has so long established his

rule in ignorance, bloodshed, and the commission of every diabolical act. Near at hand is a ruined village, once belonging to the Keratileh, the former possessors of the district. These tombs are doubtless those of the ancient inhabitants of the village, but now they are supposed to be those of some sheikhs who had come from Banyâs, and hence the tombs are called the Banwaseyeh. These tombs may be considered the Penates of the people of my village; for they are visited by them on all great occasions, and solemn oaths are taken by them. "By the Banwaseyeh and the sixteen tombs" is a common, but rather long, form of asseveration. To the east of my village, about a mile distant, under a magnificent deciduous oak, is another famous tomb, reputed to belong to a certain Sheikh Bedr (full moon) il Halabee (from Aleppo), and to have the power of curing bad eyes, and of restoring sight to the blind. Often have people come to me for the cure of ophthalmia, who have borne marks of having previously visited the tomb,—a forehead smeared with earth from it, and leaves of the oak stuck in their head-dress. When I say that the tomb has the power of cure, I mean the spirit of him buried within it, which is commonly supposed to be there or within hearing distance. However, sometimes the good man is supposed to be "on a journey;" and hence Friday is considered an especially favourable day for a visit, as then all the "prophets" are said to be in their respective places. I once had to prescribe for a man who, from some inflammation, had his muscles in a state of rigidity, and seemed at the point of death. I placed a blister on his abdomen, having previously asked the people to wash the part, but on applying it found that there was earth there, which interfered much with the action of the blister. However the man recovered, but I fear the earth, which was from a zeyâreh, had more of the credit of the cure than the blister.

When riding home one evening, towards dusk, I saw a large, bright, blue ball of fire descend slowly, apparently

on the trees of the Banwaseyeh. Seeing my Ansairee servant ahead, I rode up to him and asked him if he had observed anything. He said no; and, after remaining silent for some time, added:—"Those trees are honoured, and therefore a light descends on them; but it is only sheikhs and such men as you are who are favoured with seeing it." It is commonly said that holy places are indicated and honoured by the descent of fire on them. There have been accidents to confirm the people in their belief in the sanctity of the Banwaseyeh grove. A few years ago a camp was pitched near, and a soldier, having been sacrilegious enough to ascend into one of the trees, fell, and was killed. His tomb is shown near. I myself know of a poor little fellow who got up into one of the trees to gather carobs, and, in doing so, lacerated his thigh so much that he died of lock-jaw a fortnight after.

These visiting-places, when of any consequence, consist of one square room with door, and with a small dome above. They are plastered, and frequently whitewashed, so that they are conspicuous objects, and remind one vividly of our Saviour's allusion to whited sepulchres. Still, men build the sepulchres of prophets whom their fathers killed. In the village of Kurdahah is a tomb of a Christian priest who was murdered and cast into a well a generation or two ago. *It is said* that his body was found miraculously suspended in the middle of the well. A light is also *said* every evening to be miraculously lighted at the tomb.

In the district of Muhailby, some years ago, the people took considerable pains in building a zeyâreh of four domes, to a certain Nebbee il-Wakhâb, "Bountiful prophet;" but, as the Muhailby have of late years been very unfortunate, they have got out of sorts with their holy man, and say that he must have been a Christian, though they add, at the commencement his "sirr," or secret, appeared, and he had power to work miracles. Now they make a mock of him. The sirr, I should add, is the appearance

of a light or other token, pointing out a holy place or tomb.

Connected with the tomb is often a house where the servant of the zeyâreh lives, and perhaps a room, where sick people seeking cure pass a few days. Inside the sepulchre, over the grave, is a kind of ark of wood, and on it a piece of green calico. Strips of this are given to visitors, and worn round their necks as amulets. One day, on arriving at home from a visit to the town, I heard that there had been some commotion in the school. One of the boys had come with a piece of this stuff round his neck, whereupon another, who had got to see the folly of such things, tore it off, and, to show his contempt for it, put it round my dog's neck. Of course I should not have sanctioned this, but my Christian "friends" and others scattered through the mountains still relate how I had ordered the thing to be done.

Having built some chimneys with round tops, a little resembling the domes of a zeyâreh, a woman from the higher mountains, struck with their appearance and that of my house altogether, took it for a visiting-place, and began to make salaams to it, saying, "Help me, O zeyâreh!" The people of the village were much amused at such an instance of ignorance, though they are not much wiser.

The chief zeyârehs in the Ansairee mountains are, going from north to south, the Nebbee Yunis, Nebbee Matta, Nebbee Rubeel, Il Arbaeen, Djaafar Tayyâr, and Ahmed Kirfâs.

The Nebbee Yunis, or prophet Jonah, has many tombs in the East, one of them at Nineveh. The Ansairee representative is found at the northern extremity of the mountains, on one of the highest points. The sheikh or servant lives in a house at the bottom of the steep on which the tomb is built, and is really a remarkable man in his manner; wild, but intelligent, though living a most secluded life. When I visited him, he received me very hospitably,

and gave me a repast of honey, butter, &c. Visible to the south is the Nebbee Matta, or prophet Matthew, who it seems is averse to any tomb being built over him, for an attempt has been made to do so once or twice, but the building has been destroyed by the prophet himself, as people say; rather perhaps by the strong east wind from the plains of Meṣopotamia.

Farther to the south is the tomb of the Nebbee Rubeel, or prophet Reuben, situated on a conspicuous conical hill near the village of Ain it-Teeneh. The sheikh was a venerable old man, with a manner as if he had been accustomed to receive the great ones of the earth, probably acquired from his central position, and his intercourse with men. I have found some others of the Ansairee sheikhs possessing an air of simple dignity; in fact, a feeling of preeminence and authority communicates this even among barbarous nations. His son was intelligent, and anxious to learn ciphering, that he might be able to read dates.

To the south again is another conspicuous hill, that of Il Arbaeen, or the forty, just north of and at the back of my own district. When I first began to speak openly on religious subjects in the mountains, there was a great commotion among the lords of the visiting-places, and a certain veracious sheikh affirmed that they assembled in consultation on this hill, which trembled at their presence.

Next in order, and chief in importance, especially with my own district, is Djaafar Tayyâr, called Il Malik, or king, and the Sultân. Its lord was a brother of Ali, who, with two other generals, was killed at Muta, in the first battle between the Mussulmans and Greeks. His name is scarcely ever out of the mouths of the Kelbeeh people, who swear by him a hundred times a day, on the slightest as well as the most important occasions. No word has become more a household one with me. In every calamity he is appealed to, as he is considered the great friend and helper of our district. When a fight has been going on, I

have seen the women come out of their houses, and look towards his zeyâreh, saying, "Help, O Sultân! Take such and such a thing from me, if you will help us." A vow which is paid at some future time. The late Sheikh Hhabeeb, the chief sheikh of the Ansaireeh, was Nazir il-Awkâf to Djaafar Tayyâr, that is, superintendent of the property belonging to his zeyâreh; for it is common for people to vow part of their property to a visiting-place, and especially to the "Sultân;" the proceeds of which "Wakf," or entailed sacred land or houses, go to the servants of the zeyâreh for their support, and for the providing of feasts and the exercise of hospitality. Sheikh Hhabeeb was consequently well off. Since his death, a year or two ago, his young son has taken his place. Already wonderful stories are told of him; how, on the occasion of his father's funeral feast, water was wanting, and was supplied by him miraculously. The father was a heavy, and rather dull man, whose end, says my lad, was hastened by drinking arrack, or spirits.

When I visited this zeyâreh I started from my home before dusk. A man from a village farther up the mountains joined us as we passed, and on catching sight of the building, as we rose a hill, towards sunrise, saluted it from afar. Before reaching it are stones marking its boundaries. Here also he saluted it. There are two villages of sheikhs, Merhee and Semukhtee, the inhabitants of which live on the alms given to the zeyâreh, and call themselves the "dogs of the Sultân," giving that as an excuse for their importunity. They are of the Shemseen sect; and in the division of the offerings two thirds are given to the Semukhtee, and one third to the Merhee people. Sheikh Ahmed of Merhee I found independent, but civil and hospitable. The sheikhs at the zeyâreh had all the same appearance; dirty, with heavy faces, aquiline noses, and dirty white turbans.

The zeyâreh itself is not at all striking. It consists of three separate rooms, with a low wall round it to the

east. In the most northerly room, which is a little square one with a low arched roof, there is a small tomb, near the head of which, as well as of those in the other rooms, is a hole for the reception of earth, which may be taken away for the sick. There are two holes in the wall to the north and to the west, and a niche in the wall to the south. This tomb is said to be that of the slave of the Sultân. The central room is similar, having a wooden covering over the tomb, concealed by a green cloth, on which the double triangle is worked in one or two places. The room to the south is larger, resting on a pillar in the centre, and the floor is damp and dirty. This one belongs to the family of Abd-il-Multalab, the grandfather of Mohammed; and it is common among the Ansaireeh to swear by the house or family of Abd-il-Multalab. The two side chambers were built by Sheikh Hhabeeb, who, while engaged on the work, lived on the mountain, and exercised profuse hospitality. The central chamber, according to Sheikh Ahmed, was built in the time of Il Moazz ibn-Saleh. The man who went with me moved a heap of stones, forming the boundary of the sacred precincts, and was most earnest in taking away from the zeyârch, earth, incense, and a piece of the green cloth for his little son who was ill. He had previously on the same account vowed a calf should the boy recover.

The last of the chief zeyarchs of the fellaheen, and the best built of all, is that of Ahmed Kirfâs. He is also called Aboo-Ali, and with this addition forms a favourite oath of the wife of our chief Mekuddam. His name of Kirfâs is interpreted of his power to "kirfas," render frosty and slippery the roads. His zeyârch is on a spur of the mountains, north of that on which Castle Merkab is situated, and is said to have been built by the ancestor of the Kelbech, who was their chief when they first passed the mountains from the east. It resembles a small Cairo mosque, being painted in red lines, like some of those in that city.

There is another place worth describing, situated between our district and the Boodee, at the back of the hill which forms our southern boundary. It is a cave, called that of the Seyyadeh, or blessed Virgin Mary. On visiting it I found some trees and brackish water near, and in it two capitals of columns, apparently Ionic, belonging probably to some former temple. One of these is supposed to be the tomb. There was oil placed there; and there, also, a miraculous light is sometimes seen. Some say it is lighted every day, others only at the feast of the invention of the Cross. This place is reverenced by the Christians, as also indeed are the Nebbee Yunis, Djaafar Tayyâr, and Ahmed Kirfâs, the latter being supposed to be the tomb of a certain John. It is not uncommon in Syria for different sects to reverence what is in great honour with others, as is the case in Egypt, where the peasantry of the country, as mentioned by Lane*, "observe certain customs of a religious or superstitious character," belonging to the Coptic Christians. The Ansaireeh in like manner reverence greatly the Khudr, who, with the Christians, is Mar Elias or St. George. Consequently they often vow in times of distress a sum of money, or rather article of property, to the convent of Mar Djurdjis, situated near the Kulaat-il-Husn, and visited by me in my first journey in the north of Syria.† At a certain period of the year the agent of the convent comes round and collects the proceeds of these vows, which, in the shape of millet or wheat, he sometimes sold to me on passing; on one occasion saying afterwards that he had had conversations with me on religion, and found that the English had no creed, nor churches, and moreover were everything that was bad. My lad a few days ago informed me that a piastre a year had been vowed upon him to the said convent, and asked me whether he should pay it as he advanced in years.

* Modern Egyptians, vol. ii. p. 254.

† Ansaireeh and Ismaeleeh, p. 252.

It is these visiting-places, as I have said, the fear of which is the principal motive of a religious character influencing the Ansaireeh. They will fearlessly swear falsely by God, but are often very fearful of breaking their oath by a zeyârch, especially a "powerful" one; and will tell tales of the calamities which befel such and such a one on offending against the dues of a place of the kind. On remonstrating with them on this point, with a similar one to which Mohammed reproaches the Arabs of his time, they answer that God is forgiving and will pardon an offence against Him, but not so the zeyârehs. When pressed hard they say that they do not believe that the lords of the zeyârehs have power in themselves, but that they are accepted with God, and he punishes offences against them, and hears their prayers of intercession. In fact they occupy much the same place with the Ansaireeh that saints and the blessed Virgin do with the Christians of Syria. Property placed in the precincts of one of these zeyârehs is safe, and it is not unusual to see loads of wood, or ploughshares and threshing implements deposited there. Potsherds filled with incense are also generally placed upon them.

The zeyârehs are especially visited by the Ansaireeh on the occasion of their feasts, of which I now come to speak.

The feast of the Ansaireeh of which one hears and sees most is the Kuzelleh, and, therefore, I will first speak of it and its attendant feasts, though it is not their chief religious feast, which is the Nurooz. The Kuzelleh and its accompanying feasts, which I shall first describe, are taken from the Christians; others, such as the Nurooz are taken from the Persians; and some belong to the Mussulmans.

The Kuzelleh is held on New Year's day, old style, which is that still observed in the East by those Christians who are unconnected with the Church of Rome. It is the reckoning which the Ansaireeh generally follow in their civil transactions. In the month before the Kuzelleh is the feast of St.

Barbara, on the eve of which, at sunset, the people light fires on the tops of their houses. With respect to the expression, eve, I must remind the reader that in the East the day begins at sunset.

Before sunset they prepare wheat by beating it in a mortar to remove the husk. They then kill a fowl, which they strike on the door, and the wall on each side of it, and sometimes on the lintel and side-posts; in this, doubtless, imitating the Jewish Passover. It is then put in the pot, and boiled with the wheat, and eaten at sunset. Some of the feast will remain over till next day, when it is again partaken of. This mess is called the Hareesch. After seven or eight days comes the Helaweeh il-Kebeereh, the greater sweet feast, so called because it consists of wheat flour mixed in cakes with figs, or the sweet juice of carobs resembling treacle, or that of grapes. After another seven days is the lesser Helaweeh, or Helaweeh it-Tanee, the second, which is not kept by all.

Then comes the Kuzelleh; for the festival of the Meelad, or the 25th of December, though mentioned as of great merit and sanctity in their books, as the meelad or birth-day of Eesa or Jesus, is not kept as a popular festival.

A day before the eve of the Kuzelleh they kill and eat the "dabeehat il-harâm;" that is, any one who may have stolen an ox, sheep, buffalo, or goat, from the plains or elsewhere, kills it, and partakes of it with his intimate friends, the name signifying the "unlawful slain animal." On the eve of the Kuzelleh they kill the "dabeehat il-halâl," lawful sacrifice, and eat a little of it. Even in the poorest house some animal is killed, such as a kid; and sometimes several persons are partners in a more expensive one, such as an ox. Before the eve every one will have had his clothes washed. In the middle of the night they set off for some zeyârch. For instance, the people of my own village on one occasion went to the Arbaeen. My lad was with them. They arrive there about daybreak. Men, women and children go, and enter the zeyârch

together; and when they have each taken some earth and incense they go outside, and there they talk and chat, and kiss their friends, saying, "Eeduk Mubârah Aleyk," "May your festival be blessed to you, and to your relations; every year, O Djaafar Tayyâr, may they be in health and wealth!" The men when they enter the zeyâreh mutter a number of prayers very quickly and indistinctly. On returning to the village they visit one another, first paying their respects to the chief man. I have received visits on such occasions, when the people came in their best clothes. They make cakes of wheat or burghool and onions, and also bread anointed with oil, which they call Fateer.

If there are men among the visitors fond of good living, the master of the house will kill fowls to feast them. Also, if any great man have died a year or so before, the people go to his grave on the day of the Kuzelleh. On the six or seven succeeding days they visit one another, going by turns to each chief house, eating meat and drinking arrack. They also call in parties on their friends in other villages.

This series of popular festivals closes with the Yetâs, or Epiphany. The word means an immersion, alluding to the custom of the Greek Christians of immersing themselves in water, in memorial of the baptism of our Lord. The Ansaireeh turn the word into Kuddâs or "Mass." Some celebrate three days, which they call the first, second, and third Kuddâs, but the whole of these are kept by the more devout only. The sixth day after New Year's Day, or the Epiphany, is the one which they chiefly observe. They call the third Kuddâs that of the Christians, and very few observe it. On the morning of this festival, men, women, and children go to the fountain or river, and wash all over; the men and women, of course, at separate places. The Christians, and from them the Ansaireeh, say that on the night of the Epiphany all the trees bend in adoration, and that any one who sees them do so will

have anything he prays for. They bring stones from the fountain and place them on the fruit trees that they may bear, and on their way to immersion they take branches of olive or myrtle, and dip them in the water, and on their return they put them in the vessels containing corn, &c., or in the four corners of the house. This also is done by the Christians.

Makrisi* mentions that the Fatimite caliphs of Egypt used to keep the Meelad, or birthday of Christ, and the Getâs, or Epiphany; and says that the Egyptians of their day believed that the water of the Nile, on the night of the latter, had the power of healing diseases.

The feasts I have just mentioned are popular feasts, in which men, women, and children participate, and are rather times of rejoicing than religious festivals. They are taken from the Christians. The feasts of which we now shall treat are not spoken of commonly, but found in their books, and are those on which the secret assemblies for the participation in the sacrament take place. I shall not mention all of them, but refer the reader to the translation of M. Catafago's notice of an Ansairee Book of Festivals, given at the end of the volume.

The most important one is that of Nurooz, which is a Persian word for the vernal equinox.† In the book just mentioned one section is on "the Nurooz, or the 4th of April, and the first day of the Persian year." ‡ Accordingly the Ansaireeh celebrate it on the 4th of April, old style, and my lad knows of the feast by that name, namely, "fourth of April."

Makrisi mentions it § as kept by the Fatimite caliphs, and calls it the Nurooz il Kubtee, or Coptee. But if it be the same as the Nurooz kept by the Copts of to-day, which

* Description of Cairo, vol. i. p. 490.

† The word Nurooz is derived from the two words naw, nū, or nō, "new," and rōz, "day." That is, New Year's Day, being the first day of the Persian year. I have written the word as if an Arabic one.

‡ Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848, p. 154. § Ubi supra.

occurs, says Lane*, on the Copts' New Year's Day (or the 10th or 11th of September), it was not held at the same time as the Ansairee feast of the same name. Makrisi says that the Nurooz was first kept by Djamsheed, one of the early Persian kings. He says that the word means in Arabic, Djadeed, or new. It was reputed to be the day on which Solomon's ring was restored to him, and the birds brought water in their beaks and sprinkled it before him; hence the Persian kings used to keep it as a festival, with sprinkling of water. The Ansairee book alludes to the "ceremony of sprinkling with water" thus practised.† It is mentioned in my Ansairee MS. (p. 132), where are some lines of poetry called "the Nurooz," which are read over the cup of wine in the Mass. This day is also specially mentioned in the catechism. On it, and on other great festivals, there is a Nidr or vow, which is a feast at the house of some sheikh. Different sheikhs have acquired the habit or right of celebrating particular feasts. Thus the Nurooz is held at the house of a certain sheikh Mahmood, in the village of Kurdahah. Any one present, even Christians, may partake of the feast, that is, of the eatables of it, with the Kumreeh sect; but I have heard men of the Shemseen or stricter sect blame them for allowing this, saying that with them women would not be allowed to eat of the slain animal.

It is at this and similar feasts that the sheikhs take the initiated adults to some private place, in a house or the open air, and perform their sacramental prayers. Now is the time to contradict, once and for all, the commonly received stories of the promiscuous meetings of the Ansaireeh. We have seen that on their popular feasts, when men, women, and children assemble by night to visit their zeyârehs, there is no approach to anything wrong; and it is this custom which has chiefly given rise to the false stories alluded to. On other occa-

* Modern Egyptians, ii. 268.

† See translation of "Day of Nurooz," Chap. X.

sions, men meet together for a short time, and then only to partake of the sacramental wine. It is thus so clear that there is neither time nor opportunity for any such guilty doings as are ascribed to the Ansaireeh, that I consider the matter set at rest for ever; and I will only add, that they are as moral as the majority of Christians who are not seriously influenced by their faith. That most fearful of all vices, which is so awfully prevalent among the Mussulmans of Syria that they have come to look on it and to talk of it without shame, and which can only be just alluded to, is scarcely known among the Ansaireeh; and only among those who have been corrupted by intercourse with the Mussulmans. Hence one of the curses which they direct against the Mussulmans is, as guilty of this abominable crime.

Another great festival, which my boy has heard spoken of, and which is mentioned in the Ansairee books, is that of the Gadeer; a name which is applied to a pool of water, such as those left by the Nile on its retreat. This feast is kept in our neighbourhood by the sheikhs of a village called Beyt Rechân. A common expression is, "Thou shalt suffer the punishment of all that has been said on the festival of Gadeer." My lad has known it as kept in the spring, and perhaps the time is regulated by that of the Nurooz. This feast is mentioned in my MS.* with great respect, connected with that of Nurooz, and a certain convention, or covenant, to serve Ali is called the Beyat il Gadeer.† It is also specially mentioned in the Book of Feasts, and also by Makrisi.

The Mihrdjân is another Persian feast, that of the autumnal equinox. About that time a family of sheikhs, says my lad, are in the habit of celebrating a feast. This feast is held the 16th day of October.

The 17th day of March, shortly before the festival of Nurooz is also held in great respect, Ali is invoked more

* P. 132. † P. 105.

than once in my book* "by the truth of the 17th of March," and it is spoken of, and a prayer for it given, in the Book of Festivals.† My lad has often heard them speak of it in the expression, "Thou shalt eat the stroke of the treasure and the wall, and the 17th of March;" which words in Arabic are a kind of rhythm, and are found in my MS.‡ The wall here alluded to is the one mentioned in the Koran (chap. xviii.).

Other feasts follow the Mohammedan reckoning; being kept also by the Mussulmans, and taken from them. One of them, Ashoora, the tenth of Moharram, is especially kept by the Persian Mussulmans, in commemoration of the death of Hosein, which took place on that day. There is a prayer also in the Book of Feasts for the eve of the middle of Shabân, the eighth month of the Mohammedan year. "This night is held in great reverence by the Mooslims as the period when the fate of every living man is confirmed for the ensuing year."§ This day is styled the last of the Khuseebee, that is, of the Ansairee, year. Mention is also made in the Book of Feasts of the festival of Fitr, the breaking of the fast, the first of the three days of the "Lesser feast" which the Mussulmans keep after Ramadân; as also of the feast of Adha, which is the feast of the sacrifice, kept by the Mussulmans on the first day of the three of the "Greater feast," held by them on the tenth day of the last month of their year. My lad has heard it spoken of under its other name of Dahee.

It is customary to give to the poor on the occasion of feasts, as might be expected. Once I knew the sheikhs to be considerably out about the time of the feast of Barbara, and consequently of the subsequent feasts. In the mountains to the south of us the fires were lit a day before the time.

I have often spoken to the people with respect to the fast of Ramadân. Sometimes they say, what is the truth,

* Pp. 106, 147.
† Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848, p. 168.
‡ P. 106.
§ Lane, vol. ii. p. 229.

that they think nothing of fasting. At other times they say that their sheikhs fast; and some of them, who affect Mussulman manners, do fast sometimes. But we have seen that it has ever been a part of the system of these secret sects to explain away all the positive commands of Mohammedanism, and the Ansaireeh allegorise and personify the month of Ramadân, as in the case of prayer and alms. Thus there is the expression in my MS., "by the truth of the month of fasting, and of its persons;" so that the prayer for Ramadân, given in the Book of Feasts, must be one suited to such a view of the fast. The sheikhs have sometimes made attempts to get the people to fast for a short time; but, as my Ansairee servant said of such a fast only for seven days, a few years ago, "the Ansaireeh cannot endure fasting, and were unable to keep the fast prescribed."

I proceed now to describe the Ansairee customs on the occasion of circumcision, marriage, and death.

The boy is circumcised at the age of five or six years, or, as among the peasants of Egypt, not unfrequently much later, at the age of twelve, thirteen, or fourteen years.* There is nothing peculiar in their mode of celebrating this festival, in which they follow the Mussulmans. I was once present on an occasion of the kind†, which lasted for a day or two; and as the rejoicings are much the same as those on the occasion of a marriage, I shall leave what I have to say concerning them till I describe the ceremonies of the latter. I must, however, mention that by the Ansaireeh circumcision is called Tatheer, purification.

With the Ansaireeh especially, even perhaps more than other Easterns, marriage is considered almost indispensable; though I have heard of one sheikh, the brother of Sheikh Hhabeeb, who seemed to be spoken of with respect although unmarried, as being one who despised the

* Lane, i. 82. † Ansaireeh and Ismaeleeh, p. 176.

world. Nevertheless, in most cases, it would be considered disgraceful to remain single, and marriage is entered into at a very early age. Frequently a girl of eleven or twelve becomes a bride, while beardless boys are urged to wed. My lad, who is about seventeen or eighteen, would ere this have taken a wife had he not come to my school, and that though he is still a mere boy in appearance. Women among the Ansaireeh do not veil, and therefore a young man has every opportunity of seeing and choosing his intended.

When he has seen a girl who pleases him, he speaks with her relatives, and agrees upon the sum to be paid to her father, which ranges from 500 to 5000 piastres, or from 4 to 30, 40, or 50 pounds, according to the dignity of the girl's family. 100 piastres of this are given to the girl as "Dum ir-Rakabel," "the blood of the neck," or head, as it is termed: and her father also gives her something, according to his pleasure; sometimes, if rich, bedding and a box, which are carried in procession with her when she is taken to the bridegroom's house. But the small sum returned from the dowry to the girl herself, and the way in which the whole transaction is conducted and spoken of, lay the Ansaireeh open to the accusation of selling their daughters. The price thus given for the girl is called her "burteel," or bribe. Sometimes she has been vowed when young to some zeyâreh, and then the vower makes a feast, and her price is agreed upon before the sheikh, who receives it, giving some part of it to the father. The sheikh retains a part in money, as alms, and the rest is spent in eating. When only half the girl has been vowed, the father settles the price, and gives half to the sheikh of the zeyâreh in question. No contract is given, nor surety money necessarily paid. When the kutbeh, or betrothal, has been thus entered upon, the bridegroom can claim the girl when he pleases. When the ceremony is to come off, he makes a feast in his house for two or four nights before the occasion, so that she may

be taken home on an "odd" day. On the first evening his friends assemble only to dance. They light a fire, which is kept up by boys and others, while the men and women, mostly the younger ones, join hands in a ring, and jump round the fire in a kind of dance, from left to right. After stamping the foot in two places, they give a slight bound to the right, and so on again, singing a suitable tune. A piper is engaged on such occasions. In our neighbourhood lives a blind one, whose pipe is formed of two tubes of bone bound together, and he is considered no bad player. He has often also to instruct those who are to be initiated. He receives presents from the people at the feast, and shouts out their names as they fee him. Gipsies likewise called Kurbât, come with drums and fifes to help on such occasions.

On the next morning after the rejoicings have been completed at the bridegroom's house, his friends go to the house of the bride, and sometimes he himself, with a present of burghool and other eatables, or of other articles. In the evening a feast is made, attended with dancing as before. Next morning, which is the last of the series, a feast is again made at the bride's house, and she is brought out covered with a veil, and in high boots, such as those worn by the sheikhs. The friends of the father of the girl then give presents, which are called Nuktah, of which the girl takes a half. It is looked on as a loan, for the father gives to his friends on similar occasions. A brother or cousin places himself at the door, and will not let the girl come out till he has received some such present as a gun. The bridegroom also gives something to her mother. All this only takes place when the bride is of some consideration. She is then placed on a horse, and taken in procession to the bridegroom's house, visiting two or three zeyârehs on the way. Her mother and other women accompany her on the road, uttering their shrill zalagheets.

Before she goes into the house the bridegroom puts some millet and figs in his pocket, and goes up to the roof

with his friends, he and they having each a long stick in their hands. One of her relatives, who has carried a flag in procession, stands below with other of her friends, provided also with sticks. An amicable contest takes place, during which the standard-bearer endeavours to enter the house, and shots are fired. I should have said that the firing of guns forms an invariable part of every rejoicing. They are crammed as full of powder as they will bear, so as to make as much noise as possible, but, having flint locks, they often miss fire. It is not pleasant to have them going off in all directions, at one's very ear. When the standard-bearer has got in, the mother, or other female relative of the girl, gives her a piece of leaven, which she sticks over the door, when the bridegroom gives her a blow with his stick, and then throws the millet and figs upon her and the by-standers. The bride then goes in, and a little after is brought out, still veiled, when the friends of the bridegroom make him presents of money. They then have a feast, and towards evening every one goes home. I should mention that before the girl gets off the horse the bridegroom gives her thirty or sixty piastres, that is, five or ten shillings, which is called the tanzeeleh, or "causing to dismount."

It is said that an Ansaireeh who marries a Christian woman can only be purified after washing in forty fountains which have their openings turned towards the south (the direction of Mecca).

Sometimes a man will run off with a girl, but he will afterwards agree with her family on the price to be paid for her.

Divorce only needs the will of the man, but it is not common. It is more usual for a man merely to send off his wife to take care of herself, and she cannot marry unless he "takes his hand off her," except in another part where she is unknown. It is, however, unusual to dismiss a woman who has children. One man of my acquaintance has had no less than three wives, giving them up as they

get old and plain. It is usual for those who are well off to take two or three wives, who sometimes live together in one room. When they have children, each has a house of her own. But of this I will speak in the chapter on the present state of the Ansairech.

When a man or woman dies a sheikh is brought. Water is warmed and the dead person taken out of the house, when, in the case of a man, the sheikh washes the body, first pouring water on it three times from head to foot. This is called mushahidel, or "testifying." A woman is of course washed by a woman. A piece of linen, unsewn, is wound round the body as grave-clothes, and then the clothes even to the turban are put on, and the body buried in them. In the case of a woman much beloved by her relatives, her jewels and rings are buried with her, and in all cases needle and thread. A bier is then made of two poles connected by rope; an outer garment being placed on it, and the corpse above, covered with a quilt. The poles are not brought back from the tomb till after seven days. The sheikh heads the procession to the grave, uttering prayers till it arrives at the sepulchre. Two men go down into the grave, which is four to five feet deep. One side is hollowed out, so as partly to receive the corpse, which is then covered by large stones, supported, that is leaning, against the hollowed side. The nose, ears, and mouth of the corpse are stopped with cotton. As in the case of the Mohammedans, nothing blue is placed in the grave. They then fire their guns and return home. They sit in the house of the deceased, condoling with the friends, and partake of a repast, some of which may have been brought by the guests. These also give the deceased's friends alms for the sheikh, who perform the same duty in return on similar occasions. When the earth has been thrown into the grave, a man or woman with a good voice sings something in praise of the deceased, and from time to time stops, when the by-standers weep. I was once present at a most melancholy funeral. Two of the men of my

village (one of whom was the only one who could read, and the most sensible of the people of it) were killed in a fight. In the morning they were engaged in building my house, and on an alarm being given went off to a fight, from which they were brought home dead towards evening. Their bodies were laid side by side at the burial-place, and the men of the village who had come back tired, begrimed with powder, and excited, helped alternately to dig their graves. There was much unseemly altercation as to who should perform this act of charity, all professing themselves to be too tired. The old mother of one of those killed was informed of the death of her eldest son, and came beating her breast, till at length she swooned away. The brothers of the other also came, and a man, sitting at the head of the corpse, sang some verses in a melancholy voice. Altogether the scene was most distressing, and painful in its desolation.

On returning to the house there is more singing; and for three successive days the people go out in the morning to the grave, and sing and weep; ending always with firing off their guns.

During the next six days the friends of the family in other villages collect and send money and articles of food, and on the seventh day they assemble at the house of the deceased and partake of a feast, and afterwards go out to the tomb and act as before. This occasion is called the usbooa, or "week." Incense is burnt in the house on the day of the burial, in the evening; and when they pay a visit to the tomb, on the day of the usbooa, the mistress of the house takes with her incense in a sherd, which is burnt on the tomb. The whole village think it disgraceful for any one to wash before the usbooa has passed, and the friends appear sorrowful for a month or two, but wear no mourning, except their unwashed clothes, which are considered as such.

I have often alluded to the sheikhs. This name, among the Fellaheen, is applied to the religious teachers, and

when they employ the term in the more usual sense of the head man of a village, they add iz-zulm, that is, of "injustice;" calling their teachers, in contradistinction, "sheikh il-ilm," that is, of "knowledge." All the chief sheikhs are such by descent, the office being hereditary in their families; but, as M. Langlois says, "any one who knows how to read and write may become a sheikh." Sometimes men are laughed at on assuming a white turban, one mark of a sheikh, but they can only pass themselves off as such where they are unknown; for to do so in their own district must depend on the countenance of the acknowledged sheikhs. My lad, when at school, went to visit a sheikh in a neighbouring village. He reckoned (hasab) for him, and then said, "You were a sheikh in your time, and in a former generation I knew you, for you were of my relations, and I often partook of your hospitality." He hereupon kissed the boy's hand and gave him ten piastres, as alms paid to a sheikh, and said, "If there is a nidr, or feast, and you take alms at it, you will not sin."

When a sheikh's son is about fifteen or sixteen years old, he is consecrated as sheikh.

This ceremony is called Rasm or Taknees. My Ansairee liturgical book was written by the uncle of such a boy, to be given him as his "direction for sheikhs" at his consecration; as is stated by the said uncle and copyist.

The dress of a sheikh consists of a white turban, which even their children wear (having from their earliest youth the title of sheikh), and a white shirt, waistcoat, and wide trousers, with red high boots, and often a red girdle. They do not carry arms, and their dress is usually pretty clean. The people treat the chief sheikhs with great respect, and kiss the hands of all on occasion. Matters of controversy are referred to them, and they have to do with the whole public and private life of the people, and are constantly to be seen going about with their donkeys receiving alms in the shape of wheat, &c.

They will not eat of any food which they suspect may

have been bought with money fraudulently obtained; and consequently will not partake of the hospitality of any who are given to robbing; neither will they eat the food of Christians, though they eat that of the Mussulmans. Sheikh Hhabeeb once, when he partook of coffee at my house, paid my servant first for it, though he was reported at the time to have said that he only did this that people might not talk, for that he himself considered my property Halâl, or lawful. The Bagdad sheikh ate without any scruple, and laughed at other sheikhs for theirs. Sheikh Hassan il Kinanee also ate frequently at my house, though privately.

They pretend to a knowledge of future events, by means of astrology, divination, and ruml, and also to the power of exorcism, writing amulets, &c. They have some acquaintance with the names of the stars, and tell a man, "Your sign of the zodiac is such and such, and therefore such and such a line of life would suit you." My lad's name was such and such, but as he was always ill it was by the advice of a sheikh changed to another.

They pretend to reckon or divine by means of a string of beads and looking into a book.

Ruml consists in making a number of fine dots, like sand, on a piece of a paper, from which the sheikh divines what will happen to any one. When at Hamah, on one occasion, an Ansairee sheikh "reckoned" for me in this way, and presented me with the paper of which he had made use.

A family of sheikhs in our neighbourhood profess to have the power of exorcising evil spirits. A poor man in a village immediately below my own became mad, and yet was still allowed to go at large. After a little time he severely wounded his wife, who was brought to us on a Sunday morning covered with blood. Soon afterwards he set fire to his house and took refuge in a cave near, whence he took to flight, and has never since been heard of. During his illness a sheikh

was brought to cure him. He addressed the evil spirit, and was supposed to receive answers through the man himself. The sheikh ordered the spirit to enter into me, but he refused, as he considered me too good, and was then told to go to Hamah. The spirit asked whence he was to come out, from the man's toe or mouth, and received directions; but the issue of all was that the man remained uncured.

It is a very common thing for the sheikhs to write amulets; and I have a book in which are described a variety of most potent charms, which if written and worn will be all-powerful against every variety of disease and calamity. Some of them are mere repetitions of particular letters. Most of the children have some in their head-dress, or suspended round their necks by a string, in little cases of leather. Sheikh Hassan il Kinanee is also accused of writing love charms, and of other improper practices.

When a man is ill a sheikh comes and reads over him in a loud voice what is called Azai-im, for which he receives five piastres or so. Sometimes he brings a lad with him, whom he puts under what is called the Sir-ah, and then gets him to say what is the cause of the man's disease. If it be suspected to be a devil, he is exorcised; and sometimes the sheikh tells the man that his illness is in consequence of breaking a vow, or some other sin of omission or commission. I have been told that the eyes of one who has often been put under the Sir-ah become red.

There are numerous pretenders to second-sight. A certain sheikh, called Ali Zahir, living near Ahmed Kirfâs, tells a man all that he may have done on the road, and acquaints people with the locality of stolen property. This and similar stories are told in the most circumstantial manner.

The people fear the evil eye, which they call Nudrah, and believe in enchantment. Soon after I had established myself in the mountains there was a fight between the inhabitants of my own district and those of the

neighbouring one. These last were worsted, and ascribed their defeat to a whistle with which I had been accustomed to summon my servants. They said that I had been seen riding on my white mare at the time of the fight, and that I had blown my whistle, which brought small birds upon them, and in some way or other their balls were made to fall short, while their adversaries' balls reached them. They consequently threatened the destruction of my life and property, while the story was made a subject of merriment with my own people, who, however, warned me of danger.

The Ansaireeh will not eat of some things which even the Mussulmans consider clean, as the hare and eels, which they wrongly call salloor. Neither will they eat any kind of fish without scales. In some of these things they follow the law of Moses. When a man has killed a wild boar, he will sell it to a Christian, but spends the money obtained only in buying powder and shot. "I have found," says Niebuhr, "in my Nusairee book, that Maana had forbidden them to eat of the camel, hare, and eel; that Ism had not permitted them to partake of pork, blood, and, in general, the flesh of beasts not properly killed; and that Bab had forbidden them the zellor (a certain black fish of the Orontes), and everything burnt."*

The Ansairech have a great regard for myrtle. Like the Mussulmans, they place it about the tombs. Mention is made in my Ansairee MS. of "what is lawful, and the reverse, above the myrtle;" † and it is said that he who in a religious assembly "chatters above the myrtle" will become dumb ‡; and once, in a district near Mount Cassius, one of my Christian servants fell in with a man who was on his back, throwing up his legs, and performing most extraordinary antics round a myrtle bush. The myrtle is also mentioned in the second class given by M. Catafago.

* Vol. ii. p. 361. † P. 179. ‡ P. 180.

The Ansaireeh shave the hair of the armpits, and the Kumreeh sect that under the chin likewise. The Shemseeh do not; so when, during one of the fights, an old man of this sect fell into the hands of the people of our district, they shaved him. The people of a bordering village having become Kumreeh have shaved the same part.

In my Ansairee MS.* tobacco is spoken of as "forbidden above the myrtle"; but it is a Shemseen book, and by that sect tobacco is considered unlawful, so that their sheikhs do not smoke.

* Page 186.

CHAP. VIII.

PRESENT STATE OF THE ANSAIREEH.

I CANNOT better preface what I have to say on the present state of the Ansaireeh than by relating the events of the last few years in their neighbourhood. The reader will then be able, even before I descend into particulars, to guess pretty accurately what *must* be the social state of a people so circumstanced. I shall confine my remarks principally to my own district, and thus, by entering into a rather detailed account of particular occurrences, give a clearer picture of the general state of things.

When on my way out from England, in 1853, to commence the mission which I had determined on after my first visit to the Ansaireeh, I passed the English and French fleets on their passage up the Dardanelles to commence the Russian war. I consequently found a very different state of things in Syria, and in the Ansaireeh country, from that which I had seen the previous year. The town of Ladikeeh was in confusion from the irregular levies of the neighbourhood, who to the number of three or four hundred were assembling to start for Erzeroom, Kars, and Lake Van, to defend that portion of the Sultan's dominions. Miserably armed and clothed, they were possessed with greater enthusiasm than I should have expected from Mohammedan shopkeepers and the refuse of town populations. They marched about the streets crying out: "The gate of Paradise is open!" "God give victory to the Sultan! May Allah burn the infidels!" They were at least as dangerous to their

friends as to their enemies. When well rid of them (poor fellows, few outlived the cold and the sword of the enemy), one morning a number of sailing vessels entered the port of Ladikeeh with a still more truculent band. These were of the worst character, black galley-slaves from Acre and professed robbers, who kept the town in terror for some days. They had been originally embarked in an Austrian steamer, but on bad weather coming on they had rushed to seize their arms and gain possession of the vessel, so that the captain had put them on shore at the next port; hence their unwelcome arrival in our harbour. Armed with great knobbed sticks, studded with nails, they assaulted and robbed people with impunity; and I have reason to remember them, as part of my dinner was one day intercepted by them.

When I first passed through the Ansairee country, I found a little army of 2000 regular troops engaged in taking conscripts, and hence the peasantry were humble and submissive. The case was now very different. On my first ride to the mountains to look for a piece of land as the site of mission premises, I encountered on the plain an assembly consisting of men from the districts of Kelbeeh and Muhailby, and irregular horsemen of the government. Long-established ill-feeling between the two districts had begun to break out, the country was denuded of regular troops, and each accused the other of having been guilty of a recent robbery in the plains.

The Kelbeeh district, where I determined to establish myself, had always been notorious for wild lawlessness. Burckhardt * says: "During our stay at Tripoli, Berber [the then pasha, who had risen from a low rank, but who is described by Burckhardt as a "man of great spirit, firmness, and justice"] was in the neighbourhood of Ladakia making war against some rebel Anzeyrys." It was with the Kelbeeh district that Berber was at war, and for

* Travels, p. 171 : London, 1822.

the following reason. Captain Boutin, a Frenchman, was travelling southward, past the Nahr-es-Seen. When crossing a bridge some stones or shells which he had in a bag rattled in such a way as made some of the miserable Arabs, called Arab-il-Mulk, who encamp there, suppose that he had much money about him. He was therefore set upon and murdered, and his body chopped into small pieces to avoid detection. Lady Hester Stanhope, who was then in the Lebanon, urged Berber to take vengeance. The chief murderer escaped to the Kelbeeh district, and the people of it, according to their notions of the duties of hospitality, refused to give him up on demand. The consequence was that Berber attacked the district, and raised all the surrounding districts against it. The war went on with varying success. Once the Kelbeeh were driven to the very highest part of their mountains, and took refuge in a deep valley near Djaafar Tayyâr, from which issuing after a little, they drove their enemies completely out of their country. But in the end Berber got the better of them. The Arab refugee requited their kindness by stealing a mare and making off to Hamah, while they had to pay tribute.

An old Sahyoon man, called Abu-Saleb, who was between seventy and eighty years old, once interested me much by giving me an account of these times. His had been an eventful life, and he had seen strange and fearful scenes. He remembered two earthquakes, and a plague which, he said, had destroyed half the population, besides fights innumerable. Once he had been seized by a pasha of Ladikeeh, by name Ibn-il-Maner, a suspected Ansairee, who had intended to kill him, after having nearly scourged him to death; but he effected his escape, and with a companion afterwards killed the pasha. He was with Berber in his combats with the Kelbeeh, and related with glee how Berber had struck off seven of their heads at a time. Those were the days, said he. The dragoman of the English Vice-Consulate at Ladikeeh, lately deceased,

well remembered those times, and assured me more than once that on Berber's visits to Ladikeeh, the Ansairee prisoners used to be taken to meet him on the road, when he would behead them and cause them to be impaled. I should say that the Ansaireeh are not considered, like Jews and Christians, to be "people of a book;" and consequently, according to strict Mussulman law, not even their submission and tribute should be accepted, but they ought to be put to the sword, and their wives and children sold as slaves. The Karmatians were condemned to this by the fetwas, or decisions, of the orthodox Mussulman doctors of their day; and a certain vile and ignorant fanatic called Sheikh Ibraheem il Mograbee, who died about 1827 *, gave a fetwa for which his memory is accursed among the Ansaireeh, that the lives and property of the Ansaireeh were at the free disposal of the Mussulmans. Berber, not content with slaying the people, cut down their fruit trees; and almost the only trees to be found in my own village, for instance, are fig trees which have sprung from the roots of those destroyed in his time. Before then much silk was produced, and we have already seen that in Maundrell's time much and good wine was made.

When on my first visit to the district in search of land, a man entered the house where I was, to persuade those there to go on an expedition with him, of which I heard the result on returning to town. Four men of the Kelbeeh had gone to rob in the district of Suirt Kublee. They were seen, and the arms of one of them were taken from him. A number of the Kelbeeh people in revenge went and seized a large flock and their shepherd. While returning they were attacked by the people of Suirt Kublee and the Beni Ali, when two of the Suirt Kublee men were killed,

* He may be considered to be the patron saint of Ladikeeh. A handsome mosque has been built to him behind the town. Lately a thunderbolt struck the minaret, and the Mussulmans of the town thanked the saint who had thus stretched out his hand and seized it, preventing its descending on the town.

and several of the Kelbeeh people wounded. I noted at the time that the "woman who recounted the story laughed as if much pleased; and, indeed, they intend to kill the booty at their great feast, which shortly takes place."

Having agreed with a man for a piece of land, he was to have returned to me the same afternoon to draw out the contract; but some Mussulmans of the town had meanwhile heard of his intention, and informed the governor, who sent for the man and so frightened him that he refused to proceed any further in the business. I wrote to Beyrout to complain to the Consul-General. He mentioned the affair to the pasha, who told the governor not to interfere with me in future as to buying land, but at the same time begged the Consul-General to inform me distinctly that the government would not be responsible for my safety, for I was going to a rebellious district. This did not at all move me, as I had all along known the weakness of the Turkish government in such matters, and that I should have to depend on the people's own sense of hospitality, which, as far as life was concerned, was a pretty good security.

Having taken up my goods on camels to the village where I proposed to build, I pitched my tents on the flat roofs of some inhabited houses, and placed my property in a room below. The next night I was awakened by a shot, and it turned out that four men, who had seen my boxes, had come to *dig through* the wall of the room where they were, but had been seen by my dog, who by his barking had awakened the people of the quarter. The robbers were afterwards discovered, and the chief men spoke of writing a bond, that if any one were killed in an attempt to plunder me, no price should be demanded for his blood. Whenever at this time I used to be rather late on my return from my rides, I was met by people of the village, who had come to look after me, professing fear for my safety. When I first went to the mountains I used to ride up over the plain by

moonlight, but the chief man of my district sent to beg me to discontinue doing so, lest anything should happen to me from the people of other districts, and he and his bear the blame.

One morning I saw a little dirty bag in my tent, with earth and myrtle leaves in it. I took no notice of it at the time, but threw it outside. Two months after, my Arab school teacher asked me if I knew what the bag was. He said that he had not liked to speak of it at the time, but that it contained earth from the sepulchres, and, according to a prevalent superstition, had been thrown into the tent with the idea of causing sleep, so that a robbery might be quietly effected. After this occurrence the chief man of the village, unknown to me, slept outside my tent.

I had gone up to the mountains on June 2nd, 1854, and early on the morning of August 15th a man rode breathlessly into the village, and told how an inhabitant of the district had been killed by the Muhailby people. "Indabb is-Sarot," as it is phrased, literally, "the voice crept on;" that is, an alarm was given, by shouting and firing, to the different villages of the district, and in an incredibly short space of time the people of my own and other villages rushed off to the scene of conflict. Often have I since heard similar alarms, and at night they have a solemn effect in those wild mountains. Soon the increased firing showed me that the fight had commenced in earnest, and shortly afterwards one of the men of the village, who had received a fearful gun-shot wound in his mouth, came riding towards me on a donkey, with his head reclining on his breast, which was streaming with blood. Expecting many such cases, as another soon afterwards came with a ball lodged in his cheek, I rode off quickly to Djebileh, to endeavour to procure an Arab surgeon. A Mussulman there, however, who had credit for treating wounds, refused absolutely to come, saying that if the men died he should have the blame of it with the Ansaireeh; and he was not far wrong, as I myself learned by experience after-

wards. Others said, "Please God, five hundred will be killed on one side, and six hundred on the other!" The first-named man died in a fortnight, and in the whole four of the Kelbeeh people were killed, and six of the Muhailby. The fight had been brewing for some time, but the immediate cause was a quarrel about a cucumber.

The Muhailby people, having lost most men, vowed revenge; and there were several false alarms. But one morning, September 30th, as the people of the village were engaged on my house, it was found that the threatened attack was really being made. The Muhailby people came on our district in two places, east and west of the mountain, which, dividing the district, leaves openings at its extremities. To the west they were at first victorious, and I feared for the moment for myself, for a common threat of theirs was that they would come and destroy my serayel, or palace, as it was called. However, the people of my own district assembling in force poured in a volley, and soon drove them back far into their own district, burning the villages as they came to them. On the east they were equally victorious, and it was a painful sight to see villages burning at noonday. In this fight about eleven of the Muhailby people were killed, and fifteen of the Kelbeeh, two of them being the men of my own village whose funeral I have described.

The Kelbeeh had it now all to themselves, and made marauding expeditions into their enemies' country. The women and children were active on such occasions. When a fight takes place, the women seem like demons, encouraging the men, and supplying them with water. When the fights were ended, I used to see them returning laden with pots, pans, quilts, &c., in fact everything they could lay their hands on; while the children would bring chickens, and such like things. The wife of my Ansairee servant, of whom I shall hereafter speak more particularly, was very active on such occasions; and I

could see her on the hill near my house, stretching out her hands to the Sultan Djaafar Tayyâr, praying for success and the safety of her husband.

One day fifty horsemen came to our district, and their leader got our chief men, under promise of safe conduct, to accompany him to the governor, in order that matters might be settled between them and the Muhailby. But directly they arrived they were seized and put in prison at Ladikeeh. This piece of injustice exasperated the people of my district, and seventy of them went down to Ladikeeh by night, where they broke open the prison, released their chiefs, and carried them off in triumph to the mountains. The governor, Ali Bey, who for such a position was more clever and able than would have been expected, was now exasperated in his turn, and would not be satisfied except with conditions which could not possibly be complied with. He assembled a mob of some two thousand men, from his own irregulars and the surrounding districts, at the small town of Djebileh, immediately under my own district. He required me more than once to come down, or rather to leave my house, and I always refused, on the plea that if I did so my property would be destroyed.

Meanwhile utter confusion reigned in the plains. The Kelbeeh robbed at pleasure, and I heard in one case that a man and woman had been burnt in a house which they had set fire to, and this, I fear, was only too true. My servant was one evening on his way up from Ladikeeh with letters and other articles, when he was seized by some Muhailby people, thrown down, and robbed, on the pretence that his master had become a Kelbanee, one of the Kelbeeh people, and I have never found out who were the robbers.

At length, on Monday, November 27th, drums were heard in the plain, and soon after the governor's force came into sight, and filed past my house, the villagers having previously taken flight, after firing off their

muskets in derision. The camp was pitched in the village of Kurdahah, about half an hour's ride to the east of my own. All was now desolation. The people had driven off their cattle to the higher mountains, and buried their wheat. Just under my house I witnessed a cow hunt, the animal being brought down after many shots had been fired at her. The people of the Muhailby and other districts flocked into the Kelbeeh villages, and opened and emptied the corn stores. One afternoon, I was sitting outside my room door, which commanded a view of all the surrounding hills, when I saw three men enter a house in a village separated from me by a valley. Fortunately for them they did not remain long, for, on emerging, they were seen by some of our men who had been down into the plain, and were pursued. One of them perched himself on the mountain which divided the districts, and made an oration, as Jotham did to the men of Shechem from Mount Gerizim. I had hoisted a handkerchief, in default of a flag, hoping that it might tend to keep off marauders from the camp, for the Mussulmans of Sahyoon, as they passed my house, had threatened to return and destroy it. So the Muhailby men said:—"Ah! you Kelbeeh think much of yourselves, because you have a 'consul' and flag in your district. Just wait till to-morrow, and see if we don't, before the cock crows, enter his house and curse his father." That same night my friend Ahmed Selhab of Bahluleeh slept in my house, and some of the people of the neighbouring village of the Merj, who had received permission from the governor to return, had come to make complaints to him, and afterwards slept in a house of the higher quarter. Some of the inhabitants, who used to return every evening to see how I was getting on, were also sleeping there, when, just at dawn, the house was surrounded by some thirty horsemen, and the inmates summoned to surrender. This they would not do, but rushed out firing on the horsemen. I made sure that the Muhailby people had kept their promise, and that

they were come to attack my house; but, on looking out, I saw the real state of things. Observing a tent of myrtle-boughs on fire, I thought the horsemen were about to burn the village, and went up among them. They were in a state of great excitement, two of them being wounded. I attempted to rescue a horse which they had seized, when a Kurdish horseman put his gun behind my back more than once, as I was afterwards told by a Sahyoon man who professed to have knocked it aside.

On Wednesday, the third day of these scenes, I determined to make one more effort to bring about peace, and rode over to the governor, to ask him to allow me to go up to the chief man, and try to get him to come down. He said: "No; it is not well." I then asked him for two horsemen, for the protection of my house. He was for sending them, but the Cadi of Ladikeeh, his main adviser, said: "The evening will do." The evening never came to the poor governor. I had scarcely reached my house on my return when I heard firing, and, to my utter surprise, saw the hills crowned with the flying horsemen of Ladikeeh. I thought at first that they were only choosing better ground for the conflict, but few minutes elapsed before streams of fugitives passed my house on both sides, dropping their muskets in their flight. They seemed to be in absurd haste, but the cause was soon manifest. Wild fellows of my own and the Djennech people came rushing by, with loud cries of "Yallah, yallah!" and soon reached and shot the hindermost of the runaways. One man, who had been stripped of his things, and could apparently run no farther, was walking as if in despair in the grounds under my house. I sent my servant to bring him back, but, before he could reach him, I saw a man deliberately shoot at him, fortunately without touching him. The man who fired the shot, being a stranger, at first did not recognise my servant, and was for stripping him. I had the satisfaction to save in all some ten or twelve stripped and wounded men. The cook of the

governor, an Armenian, came in crying quarter, having been robbed, and having had a very narrow escape for his life. I never saw a man more frightened.

Some poor fellows in the valley below my house were overtaken, or rather shot, before they could reach the opposite ascent, and I was told that their bodies were piled together and burnt.

In the evening I was shocked at hearing that the Bey had been killed. He had gallantly endeavoured to rally his men, and having delayed too long had been shot in the back when endeavouring to escape. On riding towards Kurdahah next morning to recover his corpse, I saw the bodies of men who had been killed stripped utterly naked and lying in the road. In one place three were thus lying on their faces. The people I met returning to their villages shouted to me, asking me where I was going; and some who guessed my object told me scornfully that I was too late, as the Bey was buried. However, on hastening forward I found the chief man and others assembled round a hole they were digging to receive the body, which was lying near, stripped almost naked. On asking the chief man whether I could have it, he said: "Oh, yes; where are your servants? take it away as soon as possible." I had compelled four men of the fugitives to accompany me to Kurdahah; and, a bier having been formed, the corpse was placed upon it, and they were forced to carry it, as no one else would do so.

Hearing that the son of the chief man of Sahyoon was wounded and lying in a house near, I went and attempted to ransom him. But it was useless to endeavour to treat with the people, who seemed like wild beasts after the fight, and were particularly indignant with the Sahyoon men who had cut down some of their trees, and shown themselves especially hostile. A young Mussulman lad also wished to follow me, but was prevented. He, however, afterwards told the governor of Sahyoon what I had tried to do for his brother, which, perhaps, proved the

saving of my life. Soon afterwards I heard that the poor man, whose thigh was already shattered, had been strangled.

Finding that his father, who had been killed, was lying unburied, I gave a sum of money to an Egyptian Mussulman living among the Kelbeeh to bury him. As he was proceeding to do so, they brought and cast down the body before me, where I sat conversing with the chief men, when a brutal fellow, who had been before engaged about my house as a builder, took a stone and threw it at the skull of the dead man. One or two of the by-standers uttered a faint disapprobation.

On remonstrating with a sheikh about the bodies remaining unburied, and asking him whether it was not wrong, he said: "Yes; men are of dust, and they ought to be restored to dust;" but had not the least wish that his words should be followed. So the bodies remained exposed, till after two or three days the jackals took courage and devoured them.

As there was a prospect of utter confusion in the province of Ladikeeh (and indeed the people, if they had known their power, might have taken and plundered the town itself), I determined to go off to Beyrout with a public statement. While it was being written, intelligence came that the body of the Bey had been thrown aside by those who carried it, and was lying near a fountain. This had happened while my man was delayed on a message to my house. He chanced on his return to see in the hands of the people my outer garment, which I had placed on the bier, and had some difficulty in recovering it. It was now quite late, and I had the unpleasantness of going down over the desolate plain by night. The poor cook took every shadow for a marauder. I had not proceeded far on my way when a man started up from among the myrtles, and begged for protection. He had hidden himself during the preceding night, having escaped, though with one ear nearly severed. I have forgotten to mention

that when the horsemen attacked our village they wounded one poor fellow so severely that he was barely able to drag himself to some myrtles below, where his body was found a day after the fight. He was one of the most inoffensive and well to do men of our district.

On my return from Beyrout I found that the people of my own district had kept pretty faithfully a promise to me that they would be quiet during my absence; but their allies, the Djenneeh, had committed many robberies. At length about sixty of them went to rob a village in the district of the Baier. On their return the inhabitants of the plain, of the Shemseen sect, surrounded them, and after a hard fight killed twelve of them and took nine prisoners. The people of Ladikeeh on this occasion behaved in a brutal and cowardly way, just as I should have expected from them. Just outside the town a horseman slew one of the prisoners, who, he said, had killed his brother; and the townspeople went out and insulted the dead body, finally casting it into a well.

After many "parliaments" among the inhabitants of my district, which were held in the open air, and in which all spoke at once, there being as many opinions as people present, I had the satisfaction of accompanying the chief men to Ladikeeh; and for some time matters went on quietly. Soon afterwards I was stopped in the Sahyoon district; and if I had but spoken the word, that district would probably have been entirely destroyed. The Kelbeeh people were indignant at what had happened to me, which they looked on as an insult to themselves, and with their friends and others of the Ansaireeh would have been too glad to have had an excuse for attacking their hereditary enemies, and, as they said, "not leaving a mill nor a house standing." Once before the Sahyoon people had been ejected from their district; and it is only the support of their co-religionists of the government which maintains them in their position among a large Ansairee population.

At the beginning of 1856 I heard of a dreadful crime.

Some of the people of Harf, a village in the plains near Wady Kandeel, had been engaged in the fight against the Djenneeh people where so many of these were killed. To avenge themselves, the latter invited six of the chief men of Harf to an entertainment, and then cut off their heads. The following extract from my journal, written at the time, will show how such an act was generally looked upon, and furnish an instance of the usual replies of the sheikhs: —

"Ismaeel Dayoob, father of one of my boys, who came some five or six days ago, could not be brought to think badly of what the Djenneeh people had done; saying that the others had previously killed some of the Djenneeh. When I told him that this had been done in open fight, and not by treachery, he said, 'But those people do not love our Sharee-ah (or law), for they are Mawakhaseh (a name for the Shemseen sect). A sheikh from Cumeen came with him for medicine. He did not seem to think at all differently, smiling when I spoke to him. I told him it must be a defect in their religion, which did not prevent such things. But he turned off the conversation to stealing, saying that the people stole from even sheikh's houses. I asked him why they did not teach them better when young. He said, 'We do; but when they grow up they cast it all aside.' "

Shortly after there was a fight in the Beni Ali district, in which several were killed on each side. Not long before the Kerahileh to the south had attacked the district of the Merkab, and, being surrounded, many of them were slain. Thus scarcely a month passed in the mountains without a fight somewhere.

After a time things began again to look dark. The governor of Ladikeeh, finding the people did not pay their taxes, sent for two of the chief men, and, though they went down to him under safe conduct, he put them in prison. He then gave orders to the irregular horse to attack the lower part of the district. These

men were well armed and mounted, being levies from the neighbourhood of Mosul, who had been under training as Basha-Bazooks for the Crimea. When disbanded at the close of the Russian war, they had entered the service of the government. Some seventy of them made an attack on some of our people who were engaged in the plain. These did not deliver themselves up, but took refuge in a ruin, and, though but fifteen or twenty in number, defended themselves gallantly. Two or three of them — one a cripple or blind — were wounded, the horsemen having leaped the part of the ruin where they were and speared them. The cripple was killed. This fight happened on June 22nd of this year (1856).

The next day as I was riding to Ladakeeh I observed a number of our people among ruins situated on a hill by the wayside. I soon saw the reason. On the plains below were about two hundred horsemen, who were gradually approaching the hill-side. I rode up to our men and asked them what was going on. One of them replied that the government was attacking them without right. I said, "You will not pay your taxes." "Yes," he said, "we will." I asked if I might tell the commander of the horse as much. They said "Yes;" so I rode down to him, and asked him to delay attacking the district for a day or two till I had seen what could be done in Ladikeeh. He replied that he would not fire on the people unless they fired on him. I rode back to tell them so, and they asked me to return and ask the Aga commanding the horsemen not to touch a village in the plain near which he was. He said he would pay for even a cup of cold water from it. I continued my ride; and had the gratification of learning afterwards that the horsemen had immediately returned to Djebileh. It was rather a pretty sight to one riding down from the mountains; for the horsemen were clustered on the plain, and on the hills which run down to it were parties of the Kelbeeh people on the look-out, while at the base of those more distant were men engaged

in the peaceful occupation of treading out wheat with oxen.

To conclude the history of the relations of the district with the government. Towards the close of the year there was another collision between the horsemen of the town and the Kelbeeh, who pursued them towards Djebileh, and to their hurt killed the son of the chief Mussulman of Ladikeeh, who was a mere lad serving with his uncle in the horse. The uncle and father have vowed vengeance against the Kelbeeh ever since, and have had many opportunities of wreaking it.

Next year the Nawasieh people fought with the Boodeh, the mountain part of the Beni Ali district; and the Kelbeeh and Amamareh, taking sides with their respective friends, fought against each other, when as usual the Kelbeeh were the victors. But this was the close of their victorious course. The Boodeh chief became friendly with the government, who made use of him against the Kelbeeh. Towards the close of 1858 the government collected about 200 men armed with Minié rifles and a small cannon, with some of the above-mentioned well-trained horsemen. The chief men as usual put the commoner sort forward, but, when they found the Minié bullets reach themselves where they stood, a panic seized them and they gave ground. Some of the people were in a valley, and being surrounded by the horsemen about forty were killed. So terrified were they by the results of this and the next day's fight, that they met by night and selected five of the children of the chief men, whom they surrendered to government on the morrow, and who have been detained till the present time, so that the people have been brought to a state of great submission.

The government, instead of being content with a just and sufficient amount of punishment, has taken advantage of the opportunity to harass the people in every way, and by imposing new taxes, and making fresh demands, is in danger of driving them to despair. Such a thing as a

just uniform system of government is a thing unknown in the outlying provinces of Turkey. As it was in the days of Maundrell, more than a hundred and fifty years ago, so is it now. The Ottomans only retain Syria by setting tribe against tribe, making use of one to weaken and subdue the other, thus fostering desolating feuds among neighbours, which the forces at the command of government are utterly unable to check, even when desirous of doing so. Every man in the country districts has to go armed, and to defend his life and property for himself.

Were I to allow myself to dwell on this subject I might say much of the fearful state, not only of the province of Ladikeeh but of other parts of Syria, and that not on doubtful testimony. I might speak of the utter want of security in some parts, and the systematic perversion of justice in others. For this our government is responsible, in so far as it has deemed it necessary to strengthen an empire which cannot protect its subjects from murder, robbery, and wrong; and whose only proof of sovereignty lies in spasmodic efforts to collect tribute and recruits. Doubtless our rulers hope for the inauguration of a better state of things, and are always ready to insist upon it; but meanwhile they have ordered their consuls to look calmly on, while the people of the provinces are passing through a dreadful ordeal. When I was at Ladikeeh, at the close of last year (1859), the government was engaged in burning villages belonging to the Djenneeh; and murders had been committed with the connivance of the government officials, nay, traced to one of the chief of them; while the poor sufferers, Christians and others, had nowhere to turn for redress. Thus desolation was daily becoming tenfold more desolate, till it seemed as if the land would be left without inhabitants. As it is the population must decrease instead of increasing.

It may be said that it appears clearly enough that the Ansaireeh themselves are much to blame. But are they

so much to blame as their rulers, who are unable and unwilling to restrain them from such excesses? Would not the Ansaireeh quickly become another people under a just and firm system of government, supported by such a force as would render anything like rebellion hopeless? If the Ansaireeh had anything to hope or fear from the Mussulman local officials of Ladikeeh, soon would disorders vanish, and a most fertile province sustain a numerous population.

I have hitherto spoken of the quarrels of my own district with the government and with other districts. One would suppose that such a multiplicity of foes without would lead to internal union; but this is far from being the case. I have before mentioned the names of the five chief houses or families: Hasoon, Djirkis, Ali, Ahmed, and Aloosh. They have old standing feuds, some of which are kept purposely unsettled, that he who has a claim may keep his antagonist in a state of fear and uncertainty. When Ibrahim Pasha was driven out of Syria, Beyt Hasoon killed the then chief man, who belonged to Beyt Djirkis, and up to the present time the price of blood has not been paid nor accepted. Just after my first visit to the district in search of land, a quarrel took place in which a brother of Ismaeel Osman, the present chief man of the district, who is of Beyt Hasoon, was slain, and one or two others; and though the late Sheikh Hhabeeb settled the price of blood of the supernumerary man of Beyt Hasoon, who was then killed over and above those killed of Beyt Aloosh, at 10,000 piastres, the money has not yet been accepted by Beyt Hasoon. When I was present one day at the taking up of stones for my house, I saw one of the men who was at work suddenly run off to a tree near and seize his arms which were hanging on it, and on looking up I saw the reason in the appearance of Ismaeel Osman. This same man was one of those who fell afterwards in the fight.

Not only in the district generally are there feuds,

but in the village where my house is situated. The inhabitants are descended from two brothers, great-grandfathers of the present generation, one of whom killed the other; so their descendants have ever since borne mutual ill-will. One day some of them were working on my premises, when a slight quarrel arose, and each party rushed off for their arms, which the women eagerly supplied. I was in the schoolroom at the time, and hearing the noise ran out and found them fighting in the courtyard. With the greatest difficulty I separated them, and made some sit on an elevated place in the yard, while others went to the upper part of the village. Hearing these last still shout and jeer, I went up to pacify them, when suddenly one of their relations, who had heard of the quarrel at a distance, came rushing by towards the houses of the lower quarter. Those who were sitting in my yard ran out after him, and, before I could reach, four of them struck him with their swords, till he fell covered with blood into a ditch. His brothers came to defend him and wounded his opponents. When I got to the place I raised him and conducted him to my house. Wounded as he was, he vowed vengeance, and threatened them with his gun (which was fortunately unloaded), so that I had great difficulty in getting him along. His appearance was scarcely human. He could only be kept from swooning by pouring cold water on him; yet in a month he recovered. His brother, however, was badly wounded. His head was in some measure saved by a dollar which happened to be in his red cap, but the small bone of his arm was quite divided. He bled so much that I apprehended the worst consequences; but after a time his arm healed, though it remained a little crippled. It was not permitted to talk of compensation, till it was seen what the injury would be. The two quarters of the village remained openly hostile to one another; and my own Ansairee servant was in danger if he went out of his house by night. I

insisted that each party should come to my house unarmed, and their friends in other villages assented to the reasonableness of this demand. Scarcely were their wounds skinned over, before there was a quarrel with another village arising from some trifling discussion while at work in the fields; and forgetting for the time their internal feud, they rushed off in a body to the fight. I was again in the schoolroom when told of this, and urged to go and endeavour to prevent bloodshed. I immediately rode off, and was just in time. Shots were fired in bravado in my very presence; and one obstinate fellow I had the greatest difficulty in restraining from rushing on his opponents, and that only by dismounting, running up to him, and pulling him back. He once told me his melancholy story, which removed any wonder I might have felt at his fierceness. In the time of Ibrahim Pasha his brothers were taken as recruits, and he was left with his old mother in a house robbed of nearly everything. About six months after the village fight, I and the friends of each party persuaded them to an accommodation, and the wounded man accepted the sum of 500 piastres from his opponents, as compensation for the injury he had received. I got them also to swear on the New Testament that they would be friends; but as my lad, who is the wounded man's brother, told me the other day, the ill-will still remains, and will yet break out.

That the reader may not suppose that my own district is singular in its savageness, I will make an extract from my journal to show that such is not the case. It is with reference to the Beni Ali district, which I have said consists of two parts: the mountain part, called the Boodeh, being under Sukkur Fadil; and the plain country, under the family of Sukkur of the village of Ain Sukkur, and of their cousins of the house of Abu-Shalhah. "Ahmed Sukkur of Ain Sukkur was Mekuddam in the time of Ibrahim Pasha, and oppressed Sukkur Fadil and his family, who are but very distantly related to that of

Sukkur, and sent them to the army. Some years ago Mansoor, of the family of Abu-Shalhah, cousins of the house of Sukkur, was Mekuddam (chief man), and Sukkur the son of the above Ahmed Sukkur hired a man in Ladikeeh to shoot him. I stayed with this Sukkur three years ago.* Since then he has been poisoned, and this winter his brother Rahman was shot by Khair Bey the brother of Mansoor. Khair Bey was afterwards murdered by Sukkur Fadil, and his effects plundered; and his brother, Abu-Shalhah, having been to Beyrout to complain, has been made Mekuddam; and I have heard that Sheikh Hhabeeb has made peace between the parties." But such a peace lasts for a very short time. The Beni Ali people border on our district to the south, and the Kelbeeh have gained part of their possessions from them, so that, as a Beni Ali man told me, there is and has been unceasing hostility between the two. The politics of the districts and of the mountains are of a most complicated character. Men who are fighting against one another to-day, will to-morrow join against a third party; not so as to forget their mutual feud, but with full intention to return to it on occasion. I sometimes have wondered how any one was left alive. A man grows up, has a young child or two, and then is cut off in one of the numerous internal quarrels or external fights, or else by secret assassination or poisoning. How many of those whom I knew in my first travels through the country have been cut off since! I have mentioned Sukkur of Ain Sukkur. Another man I stayed with was a young Christian of Muzaiba-al, whom I described as then ill. † He has since been poisoned by the Ansairee inhabitants of Fidyo, a village in the plain, whose inhabitants are addicted to this horrible mode of assassination. Scarcely is there a village around me, where one or other of the inhabitants has not fallen victim to these dreadful quarrels in my time.

* Ansaireeh and Ismaeleeh, p. 188. † Ibid. p. 166.

When I first went to the mountains I remonstrated with the people for not planting more. I now know the reason. The more property a man has, the more is he liable to the attacks of his enemies. When in the mountains a short time ago, a man openly threatened the chief man in my presence, that if he oppressed him he would cut down his trees by night. This is often done.

It is not the government only that oppresses. The chief men themselves make use of the time of collecting taxes, for exacting it doubly from those unable to defend themselves. They eat part; the Christian scribe who enters the sums paid eats part; the irregular horsemen who are quartered to collect the taxes eat part; and the remainder goes to support the miserable local officials at Ladikeeh, or if any remain over and above to the Pasha at Beyrout. Not a para goes to Constantinople; and I believe that scarcely any revenue from Syria reaches that place (at least so the people who pay the taxes suppose), except the customs levied at the seaports, which are let to farmers at Constantinople itself.

Let it not be supposed that there are not many among the people who sigh for a better state of things. True, some young men delight in the frequent fights. A wild fellow of the village, who, like a wild beast, seems to have been born only to engage in such scenes and is always to be found at them, once said to me that he was looking out for the time when the harvest should be gathered in (the chief time of combat), which, said he, putting his tarboosh on one side, is the time for such men as I am. There are others who long for security, and an opportunity of sitting quietly under their own vine and fig-tree; but as it is, they see the uselessness of acquiring property.

Every man goes armed. No man thinks of going any distance, even in his own district, without arms of some kind, except it be the protected peasantry; for there are some in every village who plough for those who are nearly as poor, but who are too lazy, or think it a disgrace to

plough for themselves, preferring to fight and rob; and, when not engaged in this, to boast and brag.

Often have I been reminded of the condition of the children of Israel in the time of the Judges, when every man did what was right in his own eyes. The robbery of the house of Micah by the children of Dan is an exact counterpart of what happens at the present day in the mountains of the Ansaireeh. They had effected a robbery in open day, and turned and departed, putting "the little ones and the cattle and the carriage before them. And when they were a good way from the house of Micah, the men that were in the houses near to Micah's house were gathered together, and overtook the children of Dan. And they cried unto the children of Dan: and they turned their faces, and said unto Micah, What aileth thee, that thou comest with such a company? And he said, Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and ye are gone away; and what have I more? And what is this that ye say unto me, What aileth thee? And the children of Dan said unto him, Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest angry fellows run upon thee, and thou lose thy life, with the lives of thy household. And the children of Dan went their way: and when Micah saw that they were too strong for him, he turned and went back unto his house."*

It is impossible for one who has not lived in a similar state of society to conceive the vivid reality of such a story. Often, too, have I been reminded of the condition of England in the middle ages, when the lord of one castle fought with the lord of another, quite independently of the central government, and a feud lasted nearly two centuries. Meanwhile the poor trader or peasant was trodden under foot by both parties. Yet these much lauded mediæval times must have been still more intolerable than even the present lawless state of parts of Syria, since it was neces-

* Judges, xviii. 21—26.

sary to make regulations for the protection of the husbandman, and the confining of war to certain days of the week.

It is, indeed, melancholy to live under such an order of things, in which all the finer and more useful qualities of man are repressed, and the deserving and humane must go to the wall. It is melancholy to see desolation advance; and while hoping to see the ruins crowning some hillock once more filled with life, to behold on the contrary flourishing villages burnt, their inhabitants slain or scattered, and the once tilled land overgrown with thistles or brushwood. Yet such is the tendency now in the province of Ladikeeh. The population cannot increase. Never in the memory of man was the state of things worse than it has been since the Russian war. During that time justice was in a measure secured, and the country in the main kept quiet, by the exertions of the English and French consuls; but now, since the former have been commanded to stay their hands, and are rebuked if they exceed their functions in defence of men who are not English subjects, albeit to save their lives, where is justice to be obtained by the miserable peasant, Ansairee or Christian? Even his hopes from the growing weakness of a government which does not and cannot protect him are destroyed, because he finds it bolstered up by powerful friends, and therefore likely to linger long in all its impotence.

And as man decreases, the wild beasts of the field and creeping things increase. It is mournful to hear on winter nights the howling of the jackals who have fed on the carcasses of the slain; and in rides over waste tracts, through the myrtle bushes, to see one of these vile brutes a few feet distant looking at you unscared. An increase of population would soon bring about a decrease of noxious animals. As it is they abound in the fields and houses. In ridding my farm of myrtle bushes very many snakes were killed, and often have I had dangerous ones in and about my house. Entering the

schoolroom one evening, I saw a deadly snake on the point of descending on the boys, who were asleep. I struck at it, but it escaped among the stones of the wall.

Scorpions are very common; scarcely one of those about me escaped being bitten. The pain does not remain ordinarily more than twenty-four hours, and is often immediately stopped by a few drops of liquor ammoniæ taken internally. Once I heard a commotion in the fireplace, and found a centipede and scorpion in such close combat that it was easy to step in and settle the matter. At another time I found a young scorpion immediately under me on rising in the morning. It is possible to get indifferent to the existence of such things about one, though not to their bites or stings.

When hostilities have ceased it is usual to raise a flag and fire guns. The Kelbeeh, as well as the people of other districts, have a distinguishing flag. Theirs, for instance, is white, while that of the Muhailby is red.

One fruitful cause of quarrel is the division of property. My lad's father, for example, has five children by two wives. When his elder brothers by the first wife came of age, each took a part of the property. The remaining three, as they come of age, will each claim a part, and the father in this case remain without anything, his younger sons providing for him. In other cases the father retains a part equal to that taken by each son. When a woman has a son she is sure of support; for when the son comes of age he can claim his portion of the property. The people of a village, or of a family, do not always divide the land belonging to them definitively, but retain it in common, and agree every year how much each quarter or family shall take, in proportion to its position and numbers. Hence frequent disputes. If both man and woman are willing, a man, as with the Jews, will take his deceased brother's wife.

The collection of the taxes is effected in a curious way. Besides the land-tax, called Meeree, there is the

poll-tax or Furdee, and lately the poor people have been unjustly saddled with a third tax, called Ushr or tithes, which used only to be levied on those who paid no poll-tax. Moreover, when last in the mountains, the government demanded half the taxes of the succeeding year as a loan, and I had to pay my share on the portion of the lands of the village in my occupation. Many other demands were made, which, combined with a bad harvest, the raising of the export duty on tobacco, and a prohibition against sending corn from the town to the mountains, was near bringing the people to their wits' end, so that they told me they might as well fight it out at once, and endeavour to live somewhere else, as die of starvation where they were.

But to return to the mode of collection. The government sends a certain number of horsemen to the chief man of a district. He quarters them on particular villages, some in every house. The good man of the house has to provide food for his unwelcome guest, and fodder for his horse, till he receives a receipt as having paid his taxes. Taxes however sometimes remain unpaid, and I asked the head man of our village how that could be under such circumstances. "Oh," said he, "we feed our guest pretty well the first day, and gradually diminish his allowances till he has nothing to do but to take himself off." My Ansairee servant once made use of another plan. In the province of Ladikeeh much tares grow among the wheat. The effect of these, when made into bread, is to make a man giddy and intoxicated, and such bread, if partaken of in great quantities, may kill a man. He slily put a good deal of these tares in the bread of the man quartered on him, who consequently fell into a state of coma, and could only indistinctly ask for "quarter." Let me add that the "tares," called in Arabic Zu-ân, a name nearly identical with the Zizania of Scripture, are a bastard kind of wheat, nearly resembling it, and quite different from what are called tares in England.

As the Ansaireeh are oppressed by the government*, so, like most semi-barbarous mountain tribes, they take their revenge by descending and plundering on the plains; and requite the hatred of the Mussulmans by robbing and murdering them without mercy, when pretty sure of escaping punishment. My own district, and especially my own village, have been noted for these crimes, and among the people of this last the ringleaders were the brothers of my lad and my own Ansaireè servant. Of this man I had bought my land, and as he was my neighbour I took him into my service at the small monthly salary of five shillings and his food. It is true he and his household profited in many ways from his position. For instance, I would buy wheat for the school. A quarter of this would be wasted in sifting out the tares. I found that at the water-mill about a quarter was stolen. This I ascertained beyond doubt by weighing it. The remainder would be made into flat loaves, which were given to the Ansairee's wife to bake; and once she was so audacious as to take a third of the number as payment. On being remonstrated with she would strike work, and we, on looking out in the morning for bread, would find that none was yet forthcoming, on account of the sulkiness of this termagant.

Well, this man has committed many murders in his time. His father was shot when engaged in robbery, and his wife thanks me for "causing him to repent," and thus probably saving his life. Once a man wounded him in the leg and was coming on him, when he knelt and fired, killing his adversary, whose body he threw into the excavations near the Nahr-es-Seen. One of my lad's brothers has thus also taken many lives in his time. Nothing is thought of thus killing a Mussulman as a natural enemy,

* I mean always the local government; for, though the defects of that of Constantinople on the spot and its powerlessness at a distance are well known, yet in principle, now, it is just to the different orders of its subjects.

or a Christian as an unclean thing. For, as I have before shown by instances, the Christian is after all more despised than the Mussulman, who has at least this recommendation, that he acknowledges Mohammed; though Christians may, after a fashion, be more liked as harmless and fellow-sufferers under oppression.

I will give an extract from an entry made at the time, regarding an occurrence in Sheikh Hhabeeb's house. We were sitting round the fire in the evening, some men being present who had come to the sheikh to settle a dispute about land. "One man of the Beyt-il-Wahsh, of Wady Beyt Ahmed (in the Kelbeeh district), spoke of an expedition which he had made to near Kulat-il-Husn. He had, with his party, first seen two Mussulmans, whom he bound and laid on the roadside. Another man was about to give the alarm, and so, said he, I shot him and threw him among the myrtle. They asked him of what religion he was. He said, a Christian. Sheikh Hhabeeb expressed some dissatisfaction; but they made it a matter of laughter when I told the man that the crime was still upon him, and that he would yet have to give an account for it. Sheikh Hhabeeb then said that the sitting in their presence was 'Harâm' (unlawful). The brother of the man made a kind of apology, saying "that when their father died they had been left poor."

Lately five poor Mussulman hucksters were murdered in one spot.

In a distant district I met a man who had formerly been accustomed to accompany my servant on marauding expeditions, the latter having gone a long way to him for that purpose. They will go a great distance over the plains by night, and return with incredible celerity; or, if overtaken by dawn, will remain with their booty concealed in some cave till the succeeding evening. When a robbery is detected, and comes to the ears of government, they send to the chief man of the district claiming the property; but the robbers do not give it up till

they have received a "Helwân" (sweetener) from the owners, which of course is a premium for stealing.

When I have taken my servant to Djebileh or elsewhere, we have been met by people of whom he would say: "Oh, I know that man; I robbed him or his brother."

While I was with them, he and others of the village gave up robbing. At one time, I believe, entirely. I found him other things to do. I would send him to collect eggs or fowls, or to accompany my Christian servant charged with buying butter or wheat; and often on messages in the mountains. Sometimes I would give him harder work, namely, to help the Christians in cutting and loading wood. He would return tired and angry, having done all he could to shift the task off himself. What annoyed him most was being called by the women "little woodcutter." "Ah," he would say, "that I should ever come to this!" He was a difficult subject to deal with; as often sulking as smiling.

The people not only rob others, but one another.

> "Let him take who has the power,
> And let him keep who can,"

is their motto.

I come now to other bad features of the Ansairee character. The reader, after what has preceded, will be prepared for the development of the worst passions. How can people so situated, with a religion such has been described, be free from them? That religion, indeed, in word inculcates the doing good to "brethren," and the abstaining from injuring them; the keeping free from fornication, lying, and backbiting; the remembering that the "cord of believers is united to the cord of their Lord," and that he who injures them injures Him; the behaving becomingly in God's house, with humility and without a display of finery, and the abstaining from talking at the time of prayer, laughing, or anything which may interrupt the religious service; during which "no one

should have anything in his mind but thoughts of God." All this, and more, will be found in the sermon given in the next chapter. Even the great rule of duty towards one's neighbour, "to desire for him what one would desire for oneself, and to dislike in his case what one would dislike in one's own," is borrowed from the Gospel, and there given. But these precepts confessedly do not extend to outsiders, and are almost a dead letter even among "brethren." The children are not initiated into these good counsels, and when they are, they are past profiting by them. The sheikhs can make use of no exhortations, except a few ordinary sayings, to inculcate them; and are notoriously too busy in collecting alms, and too fearful of stemming the stream, to give themselves trouble in doing so. Hence the state of society is a perfect hell upon earth.

I think it impossible for any one to understand the full force of St. Paul's allusions to the wickedness of the unconverted heathen of his day, without having lived amongst or had some intercourse with some long neglected barbarous tribe, such as the Ansaireeh, unrestrained by civil government or by religion. I never understood it before, but I felt it fully soon after my settlement in the mountains. I allude to such passages as that in the first of Romans.* "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Every one of these evil qualities was illustrated in those around me; some, such as disobedience to parents, envy, debate, whisperers, &c., in the most shocking way.

When I first went to the mountains to build, our tents

* Verses 29—31.

were pitched, as I have said, on the roofs of some houses in the village. Every morning and evening there was a perfect Babel of quarreling. Brother would draw sword against brother, and curse father or mother without fear or shame. It was comparatively paradise to enter our own house when just finished; but even then, as soon as the day dawned, the shouting both of men and women would commence, with the utterance of the most dreadful oaths and unclean sayings.

At other times envy would be at work, and, though even a brother was receiving a favour, an attempt would be made by backbiting to displace him. To see a good office done to another, was quite sufficient to obliterate the sense of all good offices formerly received. I could scarcely believe such ingratitude as I have experienced to exist elsewhere, did not I see from missionary reports that it is the rule, not the exception, with savages and semi-savage peoples.

My house was at first built by contract. I had observed that the people, between thirty and forty in number, who were working on it, were only doing half a day's work, hiding themselves and the like to get rest. So the first day that I commenced operations on my own account I employed but three men, one of them of another village; for I had seen him to be a hardworking man. An old man of the village, indignant at this, rushed up to him and said, "You shall not raise another stone." I waited to see what the by-standers would say. They took my part, and I told the old fellow that as an Englishman I felt a pressure even on my little finger, and that if I was to build under compulsion I should not build at all. I also informed those who clamoured for work that I had none, except I should pull down what had been already built, or begin constructing a wall to Ladikeeh. By making a stand at once I was less troubled in this way afterwards. But I found my neighbours very troublesome. Continual subjects of dispute arose; for their ideas of their own im-

portance and rights were of the highest. Sometimes, when in a rage, they would curse my religion in my own house, though not before my face, and soon after return to civility. One day my English schoolmaster saw that one of them had been stealing my water-melons, and had concealed the skins under a myrtle bush. When told of this he was furious, and went about the village denouncing the schoolmaster, calling him the "father of a pot," in allusion to his cap. A day or two afterwards I saw him quietly sitting in one of my rooms eating. I could not restrain myself at this, and told my Ansairee servant that it was a disgrace to him to allow such a man, after what he had done and said, to come into my house. At this the culprit was ready to burst with rage; and yet a short time after, at their feast of Nuzelleh, he came with the rest to salute me. He had before asked the cook how he should approach me; and, before I could restrain him, he kissed the ground and then my foot. In fact their conduct used to remind me of that of spoiled children. One day I would be their "father" and "sultan;" another no name was bad enough for me and mine.

Nothing would satisfy them. They would take the bread out of my servants' mouths, sitting with them at meals; coming down like locusts after having finished their own dinners. They would consider it a matter of the greatest offence if it were hinted that their absence was desirable on such occasions; and really I feared at times to be "eaten out of house and home," in its literal meaning. When a child was born anywhere near, even the women of chief men would come for oil to anoint it; another for a little rice for a child who was ill, which rice might serve as a meal for themselves who had suddenly taken a fancy to some. Like most poor people, the way to the affections of the Ansaireeh is through their stomachs, which they love dearly. They go miles to the gardens of Djebileh to get a little unripe fruit.

Hospitality with them is the one virtue. As they say

themselves, a man may do anything he likes with us if he will feed us. One who "gives bread to eat" is with them almost synonymous with a perfect character. Their sheikhs accordingly are very bountiful in this respect, and their example was held up to me for my encouragement and imitation. It was in vain for me to say that I would readily imitate these gentry, if I were allowed to do as they did,—beg with one hand and distribute with the other; but that I really could not undertake to feed the district, buying as I did all things at full price.

As Dr. Taylor well observes, "Hospitality and generosity were deemed by the Arabians virtues paramount to all others. This, indeed, is always the characteristic of a semi-barbarous people; 'an open hand' is regarded by the vulgar of every nation as an atonement for the worst vices, not only because its benefits are felt more peculiarly by themselves, but because men must have advanced to that point in civilisation when the notion of property is rightly conceived, before they can discover that improvidence is a crime and prudence a virtue." *

Men would come to me for assistance who were thus making a great show in their houses. Every one who has come even from half an hour's distance expects to be asked to eat; and among themselves it is considered a mark of churlishness and covetousness if the inviter does not press his guest even to the extent of swearing that he shall eat. Hospitality in such cases, with hungry and poverty-stricken neighbours, becomes a serious thing.

With respect to the morality of the Ansaireeh, I have already anticipated what I was going to say here, and have cleared their character of the worst accusations made against them. They are probably not more immoral than Western nations. Early marriages on one hand favour morality, while on the other the facts that families are

* History of Mohammedanism, p. 57.

herded together in one room, and that females remain without education and religion, foster immorality; and no nation can be considered a moral one, where polygamy is permitted with unlimited freedom of divorce.

"The depraving effects of this freedom of divorce, upon both sexes," says Lane, speaking of Egypt *, "may be easily imagined. There are many men in this country who, in the course of ten years, have married as many as twenty, thirty, or more wives; and women, not far advanced in age, who have been wives to a dozen or more men successively." The Ansaireeh do not go to such an excess of libertinism; but divorce is by no means uncommon among them. No increase of evil seems to arise from the fact that their women go unveiled.

While speaking of the women, I must admit that, with the exception of being hard-working, they have few redeeming qualities. In violence, the use of oaths, and unclean language, they unhappily imitate and sometimes go beyond the men.

With such fathers and mothers it is needless to say what the children are in the use of bad language and in every other growing vice. Nothing shocked me more than to see the schoolboys, when the fight took place in the village, seem utterly unmoved by the sight of blood, and apparently pleased with the excitement of the scene, using joking expressions on what had happened.

Swearing, with old and young, is not an occasional but constant thing. Few words come out of their mouths unaccompanied with an oath, and that when utterly uncalled for. A sentence will have more of the concomitants of the oath in it, than of information. When remonstrated with for this, they say that they are obliged to swear or they would not be believed. They consequently swear falsely with little fear.

It was long before I could teach any of the boys to

* Vol. i. p. 251.

leave off this evil habit. Even when taught to say "Yes," they called it swearing by "yes;" so entirely did they conceive that every assertion must be accompanied by an oath. They would say, "By the truth of yes," in answering a question affirmatively. Hence they were called the house of "Hukh Nâam," or the "truth of yes." The other day I heard one young boy who had been in the school repeat continually before me, "With respect to that;" and I did not understand at first that he was filling up the blank left by the absence of oaths.

I have already said that with themselves the oath for confirmation is by one of their visiting-places; and in matters between them and the government they will swear by the sword and Koran.

It is well known that lying is a universal vice of Eastern nations. They will not answer directly a direct question, but ask another, not for information's sake, but because they intend to tell some lie, and only wish to gain time, that they may know of what shape and colour it should be, and because they fear to commit themselves by letting even the shadow of the truth appear. The Ansaireeh, as possessing a secret religion which they are bound under the greatest penalties to conceal, have, over and above this general facility of lying, contracted an additional habit of deceit, which serves them as an impenetrable shield. None can lie with better grace.

Drunkenness is a vice to which they would be more prone, had they more facilities for its indulgence. As it is, many of them drink deeply at their yearly feasts, partly of arrack brought from town, and partly of that distilled in the mountains from dried figs, a kind which seems to have almost a maddening effect on those who take much of it.

Such are some of the vices and bad qualities of the Ansaireeh; and it is not by going to the towns, or among Mussulmans and native Christians, that they can learn anything better. The province of Ladikeeh seems utterly

corrupt. As the Ansaireeh learn evil from the townspeople, so these last, who many of them in great measure gain their livelihood by traffic with the Ansaireeh, are debased by the contact, and fall below the level of their co-religionists in other parts. I, for certain reasons, draw a veil over the corruption of the Laodiceans; but will give one instance of the ignorance of the Christians. My ploughman, who had during his stay with me become slightly acquainted with the Bible, heard one of the priests rebuke a child who was talking in the church, by using the common expression, "Curse your father." "My father," said my servant, "is it right to curse?" "Oh," said he, "it was only from my lips." "But does not the psalmist say, Keep the door of my lips?" "That," replied the priest, "is only in the English Bible."

I cannot, however, omit to mention one occurrence to show the dreadful cheapness in which life is held even among Christians, and the ease with which murder itself is overlooked. During my stay at Ladikeeh two years ago, on my return from England, where I had been sent on account of illness, an awful crime was perpetrated. It happened at the very time of my arrival, and was this. A respectable Christian merchant had a daughter who had a *liaison* with a servant. To facilitate her guilty intercourse, she had resort to poison, and gave the servant arsenic to put in the food of the family. About sixteen persons partook of it, but only one, the father, died. The police laid hold of the servant, and, taking him out to the sepulchres at night, so terrified him that he confessed to his participation in the crime. The Greek Christians in the town, however, got hold of him, and favoured his escape to the mountains. When I went up to my house, I found him in the courtyard, which I of course immediately made him quit. On going down to the town, I asked an influential Greek Christian whether it were not a shame that such a man should be allowed to escape. He said, "Oh, poor fellow, the Mussulmans were hard upon

him, and treated him unjustly;" so, rather than let a Christian be punished by the Mussulmans, he was to escape altogether. I asked what would be done to the daughter. "Nothing," was the reply, that the family may not be disgraced. On returning lately a second time to my house, I found the man still there, and I saw a lame petition which he had drawn up to the governor, saying that the Christians accused him unjustly. He seemed to be frightened at my presence in the village, and I was told that he had made off for Tarsoos. That he was suspected of so fearful a crime seemed to make no difference in the conduct of the Ansaireeh towards him.

They have the good quality that they will protect a guest, though they may at the same time metaphorically eat him up; but this becomes a vice when exercised, as it usually is, in unworthy cases.

They have another good quality, which however they share with brutes, love for their progeny, in which they are, after their blind fashion, behind no other people.

An Ansaireeh has few friends away from his own race, therefore it is almost death to him to leave his mountains for long; and even a short visit to town is distasteful to him.

I shall now make a few remarks on the appearance of the people, their food, arms, and dwellings.

As to their appearance, I cannot do better than quote some words of Mr. Walpole, on account of their accuracy. "They are a fine large race, with more bone and muscle than is generally found among Orientals; browner than the Osmanlee, but lighter, fairer than the Arab; brown hair is not by any means uncommon. The women, when young, are handsome, often fair, with light hair and jet-black eyes; or the rarer beauty of fair eyes and coal-black hair or eyebrows." *

Their arms consist of a long gun, with flint lock and

* Ansayrii, or Assassins, vol. iii. p. 345. The reader will there find other remarks on their dress, &c.

coarse powder, generally made in the mountains. It is as common almost for their muskets to miss fire as to go off, and this of course is very disadvantageous to them in a fight. They have besides a short bent sword, which is often blunt, and in every way little serviceable; and they use their swords in the most unscientific manner. When in want of lead they will borrow for the time the roofing of Djaafar Tayyâr, to be restored afterwards. They carry but a small supply of balls, of irregular sizes, so that their aim is an uncertain one. I have seen no good shots among them; and they look on a shot flying as a great performance. Though individually brave, their last encounter with the government shows that they are unable to meet regular troops; for these were in small numbers, and by their own accounts some 2000 to 3000 Ansaireeh were assembled. The war in Morocco has proved how little half-trained men can do against European troops armed as they now are.

Their houses are in some cases not ill-constructed, though only with a door, and without window or chimney. The invariable type is, four walls formed of unhewn loose stones piled up in two rows with rubble between. The roof is supported on pillars of wood, which carry transverse beams. These in their turn support smaller branches, and these still slighter, till over all myrtle or gorse is placed, and then earth some inches thick, which is mudded over at the approach of every winter. A fire inside, for fuel is plentiful, gives an air of comfort to the dwelling. One or two mats and quilts, and mud receptacles for wheat, &c., complete the furniture of the house.

I once spoke to one of the chief sheikhs on the superiority of Europe, and the miserable condition of the Ansaireeh. He said he did not see that, for every one had a felt mat and quilt, and enough to eat.

As to food, though it is of the commonest quality, they are perhaps not so badly off; and, when their climate is considered, there is less misery on the whole among them

than in large town populations, even in England. Security for life and property is all they want. Had they but this they might for a century to come have all that heart could wish in matters of food.

Their chief diet is burghool, which is nothing more than wheat, boiled, dried, stored, ground, and boiled again with a little melted butter. They seldom eat meat, but have in summer water-melons and fresh figs; and in winter the same dried, with a little butter and some milk. Rice is a rare luxury.

Such is the picture of the present state of the Ansaireeh and of the province where they dwell, so far as I have dared to sketch that of the last. If the reader thinks it a melancholy one, I can assure him that, though it may be in a measure distorted from not being filled up in all its details, it is not exaggerated; and was, with many attractions, a sad scene to live in. Often had I to console myself with such lines as these in the "Christian Year:"—

> "Bethink thee what thou art and where,—
> A sinner in a life of care."

God seems still to have a controversy with the inhabitants of Syria, "because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land. By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out, and blood toucheth blood. Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away. They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks, and poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good."*

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* Hosea, iv. 1—3, 13.

As it was beside the purpose of this book to give a history of my mission, I have omitted to allude to the troubles which led to its premature close. But as some of the kind friends who supported the school may read it, I will add, that, though a sudden illness caused the entire suspension of my labours, yet I have lately had good reason to hope that blessed results may arise from the mission; and I intend, if my life be spared, once again to live amongst the Ansaireeh, and by intercourse with them to do what I can for their welfare.*

* As stated in a note appended to the preface, the Author did not live to see this work through the press. There is great prospect, however, of the good results he hoped for being realised.

CHAP. IX.

EXTRACTS FROM THE "MANUAL FOR SHEIKHS."

I PURPOSE devoting this chapter to a description of my Ansairee MS., and to a translation of its most interesting parts. I had thought of translating the whole, but as I have already given the most important passages from several of the sections, and as many of these are so similar that from one an idea may be formed of the rest, I shall content myself with presenting a summary of the contents of the book, and a translation of those portions alluded to in preceding chapters. I have made use of other parts in my notes on the catechism.

The Manuscript contains 188 pages 12mo, and is called Il Mashyakhah, or "Manual for Sheikhs." It is in the handwriting of a certain Sheikh Mohammed of the village of Bishrago, and is said by him to have been copied at the consecration of his nephew Ali, son of Sheikh Eed, in A.H. 1239 (A.D. 1824). The closing part is written in a very bad hand, and the sheikh excuses himself on account of the badness of the ink. The handwriting of the greater part of the book is good, but it is full of the most ridiculous and inexcusable grammatical and other errors. Thus, where the intention is to call Ali the *refuge* of those who seek him, by a wrong diacritical mark the meaning becomes the *terrifier* of the same.

The book contains all the chief parts of the religion of the Ansaireeh. Being a manual, it contains the different prayers to be recited at the administration of the sacrament, and in other offices, and ends with the form of initiation, &c. The book is put together in some order. First,

comes a proof of the divinity of Ali, and a reference to the Trinity, Maana, Ism, and Bab, and the hierarchies; and then a description of the names of each of these, beginning from the lowest, or the hierarchies, and so on through Aytâm, or orphans, the Bab, and Ism, to the Maana, or the names of Ali. Then, after the testimony of Mohammed to Ali, come the different passages of the "Mass" and the "Mass" itself; and finally the initiation, and a sermon to be read at the Mass.

I. The book opens with the proof of the divinity of Ali, from his testimony to himself, in his interpretation of the words of the Koran, which he makes to apply entirely to himself, and in various discourses pronounced by him from the pulpit. This section concludes, like all the others, with an invocation to Ali, by the truth and influence of all that has been alleged, that he would pardon and bless the souls of all the brethren present and absent, and give them all temporal benefits.

II. This section begins with a tradition of Mohammed, to the effect that God draws nigh to those who draw nigh to Him. And "wherever my believing servant seeks me, he finds me; for the heavens and the earth cannot contain me; and nothing can contain me but the heart of my believing servant; for the heart of my believing servant is my peculiar abode, and it is not right that anything should dwell there but myself." It concludes with an invocation that Ali may cause his people to recall to mind what they might have forgotten of their religion.

III. The third section also opens with a tradition of Mohammed, of like meaning, and is called the "section of mutual making mention;" of Ali by his followers, and of his followers by Ali, according to his promise.

IV. A prayer to Ali to favour the seven hierarchies of the two worlds, ending with the usual invocation "by the truth" of the same.

V. An invocation by the seven hierarchies of the great world of light with their forty-nine degrees.

VI. An invocation by seventeen names of prophets.

VII. An invocation by the names of the twenty-eight Nudjaba, in the human world and that of light.

VIII. An invocation by the names of the intercessors of the great and glorious Door (Bab) of God, which is surrounded by light. The names are those of the seven manifestations of the Bab from Gabriel to Salmân il Farisee, and of the succeeding ones from him to the time of the eleventh Imam.

IX. Invocation by the names of twenty-five orphans.

X. Invocation by the names of the fifty-five personifications of the Door in the books of the Unitarians.

XI. Invocation by the names of the personifications of the Door, and its orphans, in the six spiritual stations. The seventh station, that of Salmân, is not given.

XII. Invocation by the personifications of the Door in the Domes (periods), styled Bahmaneel (or of the kings of Persia). This section contains only Persian names.

XIII. Invocation by the eleven appearances of the Door from Salmân to Abu-Shuaib, son of Nusair, the Door in the time of Hassan il Askeree, the eleventh Imam.

XIV. Invocation by the names of the Name (Ism), according to the rules of language.

XV. Invocation by the nine essential names of the Name.

XVI. Invocation by the names of the Name in the *Adillah*. This word, if written right according to Ansairee fashion (as it seems to be, for it is used in another place, p. 109, where Ali is called "the framer of the Adillah"), can only have any meaning by supposing that the letter Dâd is used for Zâ, as is frequently the case in the Ansairee mountains, and in the MS. itself. It may then mean "Shades" or "Shadows."

XVII. Invocation by the five names of the Name in the Dome of Abraham.

XVIII. Invocation by the five names of the Name in the Dome of Moses.

XIX. Invocation by the five names of the Name in the Dome of Mohammed.

XX. Invocation by the sixty-three names made use of by the Name, when by a consecutive prophesying and apostleship it testified to the Maana.

XXI. Invocation by the names of the personifications of prayer.

XXII. Invocation by the attributive names of the Ism, which belong peculiarly to the Maana.

XXIII. The names of Ali extracted from the fifth section of the Egyptian epistle, and there inserted from a line of tradition passing up through Il Khaseebee and Abu-Shuaib ibn-Nusair, to Hassan il Askeree. The section closes as usual with an invocation.

XXIV. The names of Ali from the books of Seth, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, given by Abu-Saeed, in his book "Ir-radd ala ir-muirtadd," "Reply to the Backslider," on the authority of the Book of Direction (Hadayeh), written by Il Khaseebee from traditions mounting to Hassan il Askeree.

XXV. Rubric. "And he [the sheikh] must read the discourse of the Convention [acknowledgment of a sovereign by taking an oath to him] of the House, with our Lord the Prince of true believers, which is this, please God. To Him belongeth perfection!"

This section is a pretended testimony of Mohammed to the divinity of Ali, and I propose to give a translation of it, with its repetitions, so as to afford a better idea of the kind of writings which please the ignorant Ansaireeh. It is of course impossible to imitate, in a literal translation, the jingling rhythm of the Arabic, so delightful to Arab ears.

"In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. By tradition received from Abu-il-Hasan, Raik ibn-Khudr il Gessânee, known as the Mehmelee, may God most high have mercy on him! He said: Abu-Abdullah Ishak ibn-Fihd (may God be pleased with him!) told me from in-

formation immediately received from Salmân il Farisee (to him belongs salutation). Said Salmân, my master the greatest lord, Mohammed (from him is peace) invited me on a certain day to the house of Umm Salamah (one of the chief wives of Mohammed), and caused to be present a number of the chief of his companions; among them, Mikdad ibn-il-Aswad il Kindee, and Abu-id-Durr Djundub ibn-Djenadah il Ghifaree, and Ammar ibn-Yasir, and Abu-Ayyoob Khalid ibn-Zeijd the Ansaree, in all forty men. And Mohammed* the son of Abu-Becr was with us, being a youth at that time, and brought us food. So we ate and drank and washed our hands. Then the apostle of God (from him is peace) said to us: Be of good comfort; you are well off; for I have not invited you except for your good: hear and mind what your prophet says to you.

"Do you believe in God most high and in me? We all of us said, we believe in God most high and in you. Then he said: Am I not truthful to you, and no liar? By Allah, we replied, O apostle of God, we have never at all for a moment doubted you. Then said Lord Mohammed; God is a witness against you, do not lie in what I tell you. We all said: We hear and obey thee in all things. He said: Hear now what I tell you, and beware of doubting what you hear from me. Know that I call you to Ali son of Abu-Taleb, as I call you to the great and glorious God. Is not Ali my Lord and your Lord, for you are the chief of my companions? I say unto you, as Jesus son of Mary said to the apostles, 'Who are helpers with God? The apostles said, we are God's helpers. So part of the children of Israel believed, and part were unbelieving, and we strengthened those who believed against their enemies, and they became victorious.'† They are God's witnesses,

* He was a great supporter of Ali. He was present at the assassination of Othman. Being taken prisoner by Moawiyah, he was sewn up in an ass's skin and burnt alive.

† Koran, c. 61, v. 14.

and his chosen ones. I call you to Ali with my eyes open, I and those who follow me. Exalted be God! I am not one of the polytheists [those who associate other gods with God]. I call you to Ali by his command; take care of doubt. Is not my office of prophet under the dominion of Ali, for he has sent me as a prophet to you, for I was created from the light of his essence? Did not Ali teach me the Koran? Did not Ali send me to you? Has not Ali sent me as an apostle to you? Is not Ali my Lord and your Lord? Is not Ali my creator and your creator? Therefore obey him. Is not Ali your framer? Then know him. Is not Ali your God? Then respect him. Is not Ali your producer? Then fear him. Is not Ali your healer? Then be afraid of him. Is not Ali your witness, and leader, and driver? Then mind him. Is not Ali your governor? Then know him. Is not Ali your balance? Then make your scales heavy, and weigh with a just steelyard, that is more advantageous for you, and of better interpretation.* Is not Ali your keeper? Then seek him. Is not Ali your keeper, so that he sees you though absent from you? Then mind him.* Is not Ali your enricher? Then ask him. Is not Ali the giver, and the withdrawer? Then seek his bounty. Is not Ali near, hearing the prayer of the praying? Then pray to him; he will answer you, if ye be true. Is not Ali your Lord? Then believe in him, and he will pardon you your faults, and spare you to an appointed time, and cause you to enter the gardens of Eden under which flow rivers, and good habitations, that is the great acquisition.† Is not Ali lord of the throne? To him are all things committed, and it is said: Him praise all that is in heaven and earth, and that which is between them, and that which is under ground. Does not Ali know what is secret and what is open in you, and your private conversations, and what you expose or conceal? Is not Ali the subject of your

* Koran. † Koran, c. 61.

worship? Then worship him, and associate nothing with him, and be kind to your parents.* Is not Ali the creator of the heavens and the earth and the Lord of the east and the west? Is not Ali the Lord of the east and the west, there is no God but he? Then take him as your patron. Is not Ali, the living One, there is no God but he? Then pray to him, keeping sincere in his religion; praise be to God, Lord of the worlds! Does not Ali (there is no God but he), quicken and kill? He is your Lord, and the Lord of your first ancestors. Is not Ali he besides whom there is no God, if you are firm believers? Is not Ali (there is no God but he) Lord of the great throne? There is no God but he, the creator of all things, therefore worship him; and he is patron of all things. Has not Ali the keys of heaven and earth, giving bountifully and sparingly to whom he pleases; for he is all powerful? Ali, can eyes discern him? Yet he discerns the eyes, and is the kind, the knowing one. Does not Ali seize all souls? To him all things tend. Does not Ali render secure him who believes in him and accepts his sovereignty? Does not Ali preserve him who commits himself to him with true knowledge and obedience? Is not God witness to him who witnesses to his Lordship, and confesses his unity? Does not he whom Ali's mercy embraces acquire a great acquisition? Does not he receive mercy on whom Ali has mercy? Does not he receive pardon whom Ali pardons? Is not Ali he to whom you return? Therefore fear him and obey him, and declare his unity, and praise him, and sanctify him, and glorify him, and say there is no God but he, and magnify him; that is better for you, if you but know it; for there is no escape from him except to him. To him is the going back and return. Therefore hasten to the knowledge of him, and advance to his obedience; believe in him, and do not disobey him; know him, and be not rebellious against him in what he

* Words used frequently in Koran.

commands you, and die Moslems. And now avoid lying, and take not hold of it; and let not your being spared deceive you. Do not forsake Ali, for know that he is before and behind you, and in your front, and at your back, and on your right and left, and above you. Does he not comprehend all things? He knows your thoughts, and your secrets, and what your breasts conceal, and what your eyes wink at. Now I have made plain to you the verses (of the Koran), if you have understanding. Is not Ali your creator and your framer, and your enricher, and he who sends you life and death: then to him will you return? Is not Ali your witness, and producer, and sender, and he who will assemble you to judgment, and he who will ask you what you used to do? Is not Ali he who cannot be comprehended, nor described, nor named? He begot not, nor was begotten, neither has he any equal; neither has he been incarnate in any body, nor taken to him a female companion, nor a child. Neither has he any partner in his dominion, nor any to protect him from contempt, therefore magnify him greatly.* He has no partner in his dominion, nor helper, nor aid, nor supporter, nor like, nor one similar, nor one of equal weight or sameness. He is the first without resemblance and without beginning, and he is the last without decay, passing away, or end. He appears (is iz-Zahir) in revelation (or through miracles), and is concealed (is il-Batin) in created things. Is not Ali he beside whom there is no God, the living, the self-existent? Neither slumber nor sleep seizeth him. His is all that is in heaven and earth; who will intercede with him, except by his permission? He knows what is before you, and behind you; none comprehend anything of his knowledge, except what he pleases; his throne fills heaven and earth, neither does the preservation of them tire him; he is the lofty and great one.† Is not Ali he in whose hand are wealth and mercy? He is all powerful.

* Koran, xvi. 111.

† Koran, ii. 256.

Is not Ali the knowing one and the creator of the earth? No one can bear the sight of him, nor can any one stand in his sight.

"Then he turned, and our Lord, the prince of true believers (may his strength be exalted!), was sitting on his right hand. So he said to him: I ask thee by the strength of thy strength, and the might of thy glory, and thy greatness, and the dignity of thy Godhead, and the greatness of thy kingdom; — and our Lord Mohammed (from him is peace), had not finished his words before our Lord, the prince of bees (may he be glorified and exalted!), absented his person, and there shone upon us a great light, whose nature could not be comprehended, nor its vision and end be attained to; and already a swoon had come on us from the intensity of its shining, and we saw it as it were in dream; and, if it had been by the sight of the eyes, we should have lost our sight, and our reason; but there fell on us as if slumber and a swoon. And we continued saying: 'Praise be to thee, how great is thy dignity! We believe in thee, and believe thine apostle.' And there was not one of us who did not worship, and see a vision, from the awe and fear which had fallen upon us. And trembling and palpitation seized us; and our spirits departed, and we became like dead men. We had no power of reasoning, but were in a dream; and saw as a sleeper seeth, and our spirits left our bodies, until an hour of the day had passed over us. Then we awoke, being like one who sleeps when he is aroused from his sleep. And we saw the apostle of God (on him be peace!), who said to us, How long have you remained? We said, An hour, or part of an hour. He said, No, you have remained seven nights and eight days. But two of the people who were infidels apostatised, and said: 'This is evident sorcery, shall we believe in two men like us, whose people are our servants?'* The people

* An expression taken from the Koran.

of iz-Zahir [the Mussulmans] are acquainted with this day, and it is called the 'Convention of the house.' This convention is before that of the Ghadeer [pool].. What manifestation is more evident, and what witness greater, and what proof more just than that which is given in this information received from the greatest Lord, Mohammed (may God favour and preserve him!), and which he has manifested to the people of truth and faith, and exposed to those endued with intellect and understanding, with respect to the evidencing and making known the unity of our Lord, and his indication of him, for the greatest of his end and Meaning [Maana]? May God be exalted, and His names sanctified!

"O God, I ask thee, my Lord, by the truth of this discourse of the Convention of the house, and by the truth of Mohammed the chosen, and by the truth of Salmân the righteous, and by the truth of the pure Orphans, and by the truth of Yasir and Ammar*, and by the truth of all the lights, and by the certainties of the mysteries, and by the truth of the treasure and the wall, and the 17th of March†, and by their truth with thee, and by thy dignity over them, O great, O powerful one, O creator of the night and of the day; (I ask thee) that thou, my Lord, wilt pardon us and all our brethren the true believers, all our faults and weighty sins, and deliver us from the world of confusion and sorrows, and transport us to the companionship of the pure, and keep from us the wickedness of the wicked, and the snares of the unholy, and the violence of the violent, and the heat of fire, and the injustice of neighbours; and that thou wilt clothe us with the envelopes of light, and give posterity to, and bless, the possessors of this goodness and of this favour and of these impressions;

* Yasir, son of Ammar, was one of the companions of Mohammed especially reverenced by the Ansaireeh. "He was appointed governor of Cufa by Omar and deposed by Othman. He died fighting for Ali at Saffair (year 37)." El Masudi, Nicholson, p. 112.

† See above, Ch. VII.

and that thou wilt cause favour and peace to come on our Lord il Khudr-il-Akhdar [the evergreen Khudr] and king Djaafar Tayyâr *; and that thou wilt sanctify and have mercy on the souls of our brethren the true believers, in all quarters and all capitals, O prince of bees, O lofty one [Ali], O great one!"

XXVI. *Rubric.* "Then he shall read another discourse; that is, the discourse of the Awhâm [fancies, doubt]." This discourse consists of an ascription of praise to Ali, under different designations, as he who created the spirits, seas, rivers, &c.; the queen bee of religion; the foundation of foundations; causing to appear Jesus of the gospel; the creator of the Veils; the Lord of every lord; the element of elements; the first, the last; the Batin, the Zahir.

XXVII. *Rubric.* "Then he shall read the Tawdjeeh (turning the face, to commence prayer), which is this. In the name of God the compassionate and merciful! God is most great! He is great! Many thanks be to God! Praise be to God, morning and evening! I turn my face toward the manifest greatness," &c. The Mussulmans use a similar prayer, and one commencing with similar words, as a preparation to prayer. This prayer, with others, is to be read at the mass.

XXIX. This section contains the morning and evening prayer to be said by an Ansairee. I have already translated the chief part of the section, which closes with a tradition of Mohammed. Then comes the service of the mass. This section is indicated by a side note, as the Khutbeh, or discourse *par excellence*, which is mentioned in the "rubric" of the mass as among the things to be read at that service.

XXX. *Rubric.* "Then he shall read the arrangement and order of the prayer (of the mass). And when you [the sheikh] have read in full the names of the prince of true believers [contained in a previous section], if the

* See above, Ch. V.

prayer be a mass [Kuddâs], you will omit the Khutbeh [see last section] and the Tawdjeeh [see last section but one] and the Khabr [a sermon given at the end of the book], and you will read the five bodies [probably the five luminous bodies, or the five orphans, alluding to the sections concerning them], and you will read the first mass, and the indication [contained in it], and the second mass and the Ain of Ali. Now this is the prayer of the mass; two prostrations from a sitting posture.* And if the prayers be longer, you will read to the 'testimony' [occurring nearly at the end of the complete service]. But in the prayer, when complete, you will read the name of the prince of true believers, and the Khutbeh and the Tawdjeeh and the Khabr. Then you will read the first [probably of the above sections of the names of Ali, &c.], and mix the wine with water. Then you must read the passage, the words of the most high: 'And when the Koran is read, attend thereto and keep silence; that ye may obtain mercy. And meditate on thy Lord in thine own mind, with humility and fear, and without loud speaking, evening and morning; and be not one of the negligent. Moreover, the angels that are with thy Lord do not proudly disdain his service, but they celebrate his praise and worship him.'† Then you will say: *Bow down to the ground.* Then you will read the second [of the sections to be read], and kiss the right and left hand [or the first standing on your right and left], and will read the 'worshipping,' the words of the Most High:

* To understand this and other coming allusions to the posture of prayer such as "to the ground," "like a bow," &c., I must refer the reader to the letter-press and illustrations of Lane's Modern Egyptians, vol. i. p. 107.

† Koran, c. vii. v. 203. In this and subsequent passages I have followed Sale's translation, which is acknowledged by the greatest Arabic scholars to be generally correct. It would have been pedantic in the present case to have acted otherwise. I have also followed the Koran and not the ungrammatical quotations of it in my MS., which exceedingly distressed my Mohammedan sheikh.

'T. S. M. These are the signs of the perspicuous book. Peradventure thou afflictest thyself unto death, lest the Meccans become not true believers. If we pleased we could send unto them a convincing sign from heaven, unto which their necks would humbly submit.'* *To the ground.* The words of the most high: 'Remember when thy Lord said unto the angels, Verily I am about to create man of dried clay, of black mud, wrought into shape; when, therefore, I shall have completely formed him, and shall have breathed of my spirit into him; do ye fall down and worship him.'† *To the ground.* And the words of the Most High: 'Verily they only believe in our signs, who, when they are warned thereby, fall down adoring, and celebrate the praise of their Lord, and are not elated with pride.'‡ *To the ground.* And the words of the Most High: 'By the star, when it setteth; your companion Mohammed erreth not; nor is he led astray; neither doth he speak of his own will. It is no other than a revelation which hath been revealed to him. One mighty in power, endued with understanding, taught it him: and he appeared in the highest part of the horizon. Afterwards he approached unto the prophet, and near unto him, until he was at the distance of two bows' length from him, or yet nearer.'§ *A bow* [that is, a bending in the shape of a bow, which forms part of the Mussulman's prayer]. Then you will command those on your right to pray, each one as he is able. Then you will read the passage, the words of the Most High: 'The approaching day of judgment draweth near; there is none who can reveal the exact time of the same, besides God. Do ye, therefore, wonder at this new revelation; and do ye laugh, and not weep, spending your life in idle diversions? But rather worship God, and serve him.'‖ *To the ground.* Then you will order him who is on your

* Koran, xxvi. 1. † Ib. xv. 28. ‡ Ib. xxxii. 15.
§ Ib. liii. 1. ‖ Ib. liii. 58.

right to pray the prayer of 'worshipping,' and he who is on his right to pray the prayer of 'the hierarchies' [a previous section], and you must kiss one another's hands, and you will say, at the kissing of the hand, 'On you be peace, my brother, and the best of salutations, by the truth of the Khudr and Abraham. Then you will take the cup, and read over it the first mass [Kuddâs, consecration]. Which is this:—

"In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful! Praise be to God for ever! Ali is the light of mortals! Ali is the Lord of might! Ali is the cleaver of the grain [of wheat, &c.]!* Ali is the Imam of imams! Ali is the producer of the breath! Ali is the Imam of the Mihrâb [place in mosque, towards which prayer is said, as being in the direction of Mecca]! Ali is the remover of the the gate!† Ali is the disperser of sorrows! Ali is the possessor of miracles! Ali raised the heavens! Ali caused the waters to flow! Ali spread out the earth! Ali is he by whose hands the soul is taken [from the body]. Ali is the beauty of grey hairs! Ali knows what is absent! Ali is the Lord of lords! Ali is the possessor of necks ['neck' being applied to captives, &c.]! Ali is the secret of secrets! Ali causes the vow to be completed! Ali is acquainted with the mystery! Ali is master of this world! Ali is Lord of the next world, and the first! Ali is the creator of things beautiful in our age! Ali is lofty in station! Ali is frequent in miracles! Ali is the Lord of the east and of the west! Ali is the horseman among horsemen! Ali is the quickener of decaying bones! Ali is the light of vision! Ali clave the moon!‡ Ali is the

* Used, in the Koran, of God, as causing grains of wheat to vegetate.

† It is said that when besieging the Jewish town of Khaiban, which was taken mainly through his valour, he took the gate off its hinges as a shield.

‡ Alluding to the passage in the Koran, ch. liv. ver. 1: "The hour of judgment approacheth; and the moon hath been split in sunder;" which some interpret of an actual occurrence, already taken place, and one of the four miracles of Mohammed mentioned in the Koran.

charging [on the enemy] imam! Alj is the striker with the sword [literally, 'that which has joints, like a backbone,' a name given to Mohammed's sword]! Ali is the lion frequent in attacks! Ali is the creator of the night and of the day! Ali is powerful! Ali is victorious! Ali is the first and the last! Ali is Batin and Zahir! Ali causes to find, and is present! Ali is Samit and Natik [expressions used of the mute and speaking prophets by the original Ismaeleeh, see Chap. IV.]! Ali tears open and repairs! Ali is the great building! Ali is the straight road! Ali is the haiderah [lion] who has no hair on the temples [among the Arabs a mark of a generous and good character]! Ali is brotherly to Joshua [one of his manifestations]! Ali is the master of him of the fish [Jonah]! Ali is the eye of eyes! Ali is the filler of the seas! Ali is the frequented house [the Caabah of Mecca]! Ali is the blower of the trumpet [that is, of the judgment day]! Ali is the ancient of days! Ali is the speaker of truth! Ali is the true one in speaking! Ali is the guide of the heavens! Ali is the friend of those who praise [him]! With Ali is the knowledge of the book! Ali causes the clouds to move! Ali is the Imam of imams! Ali is the key of mercy! Ali is the breaker of idols! Ali is the supporter of the demonstration of religion and Islâm! Ali is the destroyer of the violent one [or giant]! Ali is the light of lights! Ali is true of promise! Ali is one! Ali is single! Ali is Abel, Ali is Seth, Ali is Joseph, Ali is Joshua, Ali is Asaph, Ali is Shamoon, is Safa [Simon Cephas], Ali is the Emeer-il-Moomeneen [prince of true believers, a name only to be given to Ali], the remembrance of him is glorious and to be magnified! And it is such a one, O brethren, that we mean and intend, and refer to as former ages referred to him, and as Unitarians have indicated the priority of his essence, from the beginning of creation until this time. We refer to him, as did refer our sheikh and lord, and crown of our heads, and learned one of our age, the sheikh of the season, and exemplar of his period, Abu-Abdullah

il Hosein ibn-Hamdân. We refer to him as did refer his sheikh and lord, Abu-Mohammed Abd-Allah, the ascetic, the intellectual. We refer to him as did refer the Orphan of the time [or rare, i. e. noted, Orphan], Mohammed ibn-Djundub. We refer to him as the Door referred, and the Veil indicated his 'meaning,' in the Seven Periods. My reference and yours is with all certainty to our Lord Ali, prince of true believers; without hair on temples; with great belly [one of Ali's characteristics]; the undivided atom, which cannot be broken up into portions and parts, nor separated, nor distributed [an allusion to the atomic theory of philosophers]; to whom, from the greatness of his dignity and awfulness, necks submit themselves and hard matters become easy.

"Then they shall rise up, and he shall take the chalice in his hand, and read the Nurooz, which is this [in doggerel verse]: —

'By the Nurooz of truth, full of benefit, taking spoils,
Made exact by the care of the most honourable of the house of Hashim,
On the day that God manifested his appearance
Before the Arabs in the Persian periods,
And was exalted by it towards heaven, and they saw
In it the prevailing benefits by an exact opinion;
And on that day was the appearance of Salsal as an observer of men,
Who was conformable to our Ancient One [Ali] the predecessor.
They drink of the pure wine, for it
Is a day whose light has appeared from the clouds,
Namely, the day of the pool [Ghadeer], and Mohammed has already referred
In intention to God, the knowing Lord.'

"Then thou shalt say the 'reference' [or 'indication'] to the end*, and then read the second mass [Kuddâs]; which is this: —

"In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful! The information is derived from our sheikh and lord, Abu-Abdullah-il-Hoseyn ibn-Hamdân il Khaseebee, possessor of

* What this is does not appear. The word may signify the signs made by the hand, for it is used in this sense, as also of reference to a thing by words.

the correct opinion (the good-will of God be on him at every sunrise and sunset!). He said that when Abd-in-Noor [the wine, called 'servant of light,' or of Ali] was present in his hands, he used to take the cup in his right hand and drink three draughts of it, and chant over it this blessed mass, and say*: Praise be to God, who alone is the lofty one, who has executed his promise, and given victory to his servant, and strengthened his armies, and destroyed his opposers, and alone put to flight the conspirators! † There was no God before him, neither shall there be any God after him; the refuge of those who seek him; the end of those who have knowledge; God of the first ages, and God of the last; to him belongeth the pur ereligion, and what you call on instead of him is vain.‡ God is the lofty and great one, the prince of true believers; the true and manifest king. O God, favour our Lord Mohammed and the family of our Lord Mohammed, and Salsal and the family of Salsal, the lamps of darkness and the keys of words, the guides of created things in ancient times, the testimony of deliverance until the time when there shall be no escape. O God, this thy servant, Abd-in-Noor, is a person whom thou hast rendered lawful and honoured and favoured, for those who know thee, by a determinate decree, and rendered unlawful to thine enemies, who deny and disown thee, by a manifest prohibition; as, O God, my Lord, thou hast rendered it lawful unto us. Enrich us by it with safety and security, and health from sicknesses, and keep from us through it care and sorrows, and make our assembling together, and such like meetings, result in what is pleasing, and by similar meetings give us what is beneficial, and make our meeting pure in thine obedience, and fit us for doing what may please thee; and begin (in the conferring of thy benefits) with our brethren, the true

* All the first part of this mass is used by Mussulmans on the occasion of a feast.

† Used, in the Koran, of the hostile idolatrous Arabs.

‡ From the Koran.

believers, in the earth, its east and west, north and south; and cause our word and theirs to unite in the ascription of unity to thee; and after them adorn us, and do not separate between us and them; for thou art lofty [Ali] and great, and able to do what thou pleasest. The words of the Most High *: 'When thou lookest, there shalt thou behold delights and a great kingdom. Upon them shall be garments of fine silk and of brocades, and they shall be adorned with bracelets of silver: and their Lord shall give them to drink of a most pure liquor; and shall say unto them, Verily this is your reward; and your endeavour is gratefully accepted.' From the fountains of Tasneen [a fountain in Paradise] he shall be made to drink wine of Salsal, sealed with sweet odours. May God cause us and you, O brethren, to drink a draught from the palm of Salsal; there shall be no thirstiness after it on the day of the great thirst! Remember the secret [of Ain the first letter of Ali], may God enrich you with its blessing and acceptance!

"And when you have finished you will mix the drink with water and give to drink to the one who is on your right and the one on your left, and you will say to him, 'O brother, drink of my cup, may God make it healing and health to thee!' Then you will say, 'O brother, give me to drink of thy cup, may God give thee to drink a draught from the palm of Salsal, after which there will be no thirstiness on the day of the great thirst!'

"Then you will read the passage, the words of the Most High †: 'And their Lord shall give them to drink of a most pure liquor; and shall say unto them, Verily this is your reward, and your endeavour is gratefully accepted. Verily we have sent down to thee the Koran by a gradual revelation. Wherefore wait patiently the judgment of thy Lord; and obey not any wicked person or unbeliever among them. And commemorate the name of thy Lord,

* Koran, lxxvi. 20. † Ib. lxxvi. 22.

in the morning and in the evening; and during some part of the night worship him, and praise him a long part of the night.' *A bow.* And the words of the Most High*: 'To God belongeth the east and the west; therefore, whithersoever ye turn yourselves to pray, there is the face of God; for God is omnipresent and omniscient. They say God hath begotten children: God forbid! To him belongeth whatever is in heaven and on earth. All is possessed by him.' *A bow.* Then you will order the perfume to be sprinkled (rose-water or the like), and will read: 'I testify that Ali is the God of created beings, the disposer of what is in the heart': —

> 'And God has not veiled himself from his creation,
> But they have become veiled by their faults;
> And, if they had but believed and been pious,
> They would have become angels in the invisible world,
> Praising (God) in his ancient kingdom,
> Being purified from all their errors.'

"Then you will read the passage, the words of the Most High*: 'Carefully observe the appointed prayers and the middle prayer, and be assiduous therein, with devotion towards God.' *A bow.* Then thou wilt command those on the left to pray, every one as he conveniently can; and wilt read the passage, the words of the Most High:‡ 'The Merciful taught his servant the Koran. He created man; he hath taught him distinct speech. The sun and the moon run their courses according to a certain rule; and the vegetables which creep on the ground, and the trees worship.' *To the ground.* Then thou wilt command him on the left to pray the prayer of 'worshipping,' and him who is on his left to pray the prayer of 'peace.' Then the imam [the leader of the prayers] shall invoke the twelve Imams, and shall say, 'O God, we remain steadfast in thine obedience with the utmost steadfastness.' Then you will read the Imamayeh [probably the name of the Imams in some composition for

* Koran, ii. 109. † Ib. ii. 239. ‡ Ib. lv. 1.

that purpose]; and will read the passage, the words of the Most High*: 'When the angels said, O Mary, verily God hath chosen thee, and hath purified thee, and hath chosen thee above all the women of the world: O Mary, be devout towards thy Lord, and worship, and bow down with those that bow down.' *To the ground.*

"Then thou shalt kiss the ground, and say, 'This is for God and the Imam.' Then thou shalt take the chalice, and say: 'The secret of the Imam, the requiring, the conquering, who strikes the crowns with the edge of the cleaving swords, Ali son of Abu-Taleb, and this is his secret.' *Then thou shalt mix the drink with water, and shalt say:* 'The secret of the Imam of every imam, my Lord Ali, master of every age and every time; the secret of his Veil, the Lord Mohammed; the secret of his Door; the Lord Salmân; the secret of his Orphans, and the hierarchies of peace; the secret of our sheikh and lord, Abu-Abdullah il Hosein-ibn Hamdân, who manifested to us the religions in all countries (on him and on his disciples may there be from God the greatest favour and peace!); the secret of Il Djalee Abu-Saeed†, and of the sheikhs of knowledge, the Unitarians; the secret of every true believer and religious man in all countries, and therefore thy secret‡, O illustrious sheikh, and favoured beloved one, and polished sword, and pure and original branch (may God guard thee and preserve thee, and not deprive thee of his benefits, and may he have mercy on thy mother and thy father; and may God cause to be frequented through thee the sittings of the Unitarians, by the truth of the book Tadjreeh!§; thy secret, and the secret of

* Koran, iii. 37.

† An authority or doctor of the Ansaireeh, mentioned Journ. Asiat. Feb. 1848, p. 157.

‡ Besides the sheikh who reads the greater part of the service, it appears from what has preceded and follows that there is a chief sheikh present, who acts as imam, or president of the meeting.

§ There is a book among the Mussulmans so called, as compiled from various others; perhaps there is a similar one among the Ansaireeh.

the person near whom stands Ali, the Imam of imams [perhaps the reader of all this]; from him [Ali] may God enrich you and all your brethren, the true believers, with acceptance and mercy; thy secret, and the secret of thy right and of thy left [those standing there], and of thy preeminence above all thy brethren; your secret, O Mohammedan assembly, and the secret of him who unites you in assembling in this place (may God not cut off your secret, nor your mysteries, in all times and ages, by the dignity of the pure Imams, and the 17th of March!); your secret (may God not harm you!).' Then you will mix the drink with water, and enter into convention (as by taking the hand in offering the oath to a sovereign) with him on your right, and him on your left, and you will say: 'We have drunk the secret of the Imam, and thou hast drunk our secret, and we have drunk thy secret. May God make the knowledge of the Lord easy to thy heart! May God cause to continue thy drink, and cause thee to obtain thy wish! May God deliver thee from all thy sorrow and afflictions! May God reckon with thee with an easy reckoning, and not a difficult one!' Then you will read the Khabr [the sermon to be given hereafter], and will then read the passage, the words of the Most High *: 'When we appointed the holy house of Mecca to be a place of resort for mankind, and a place of security; and said, Take the station of Abraham for a place of prayer; and we covenanted with Abraham and Ishmael, that they should cleanse my home for those who should compass it, and those who should be devoutly assiduous there, and those who should bow down and worship.' *A bow.* Then you will read the chapter of the Mountain †, and will then read the passage, the words of the most high ‡: 'O true believers, bow down, and prostrate yourselves, and worship your Lord; and work righteousness, that ye may be happy.' *To the ground.*

* Koran, ii. 119. † Ib. clii. ‡ Ib. xxii. 79.

" Then thou shalt drink the secret of the people of the house [of Mecca], and shalt say: 'The secret of the habitation, and what the habitation contains; the secret of my Lord Mohammed, master of every habitation; the secrets of the four corners of the house, masters of the habitation; Hamza and Talib and Djaafar and Akeel, the brothers of the prince of true believers (may these be on us from the remembrance of their favour and mercy!); your secret, brethren, all of you, may God not cut off your secret by the truth of the forty holy men!' * Then you must enter into convention with him on your right, and on your left, and say: 'We have drunk the secret of the masters of the habitation, and thou hast drunk our secret, and we have drunk thy secret; may God render the knowledge of thy Lord easy to thy heart! May God continue thy drink! May God cause thee to obtain thy wish! May he deliver thee from all thy sorrow and afflictions! May God reckon with thee with an easy reckoning, and not a difficult one!' Then you will read the Hedjabeeh [discourse on prayer of the Veil], and will then read the passage, the words of the Most High †: 'When Joseph said unto his father, O my father, verily I saw in my dream eleven stars, and the sun and the moon; I saw them make obeisance unto me.' *A bow.* Then thou shalt read the Nakeebah [discourse or prayer of Nakeebs], and then read the passage, the words of the Most High‡: 'Blessed be He who has placed the twelve signs in the heavens; and has placed therein a lamp by day, and the moon which shineth by night! It is He who hath ordained the night and the day to succeed each other, for the observation of him who will consider, or desireth to show his gratitude. The servants of the merciful are those who walk meekly on the earth, and, when the ignorant speak unto

* There is more than one mountain in Syria called Djebel-il-Arbaem, or mountain of the forty. I have spoken of the one among the Ansaireeh.

† Koran, xii. 4. ‡ Ib. xxx. 62.

them, answer, Peace: and who pass the night adoring the Lord, and standing up to pray unto him.' *A bow.*

"Then thou shalt drink the secret of the Nakeebs and Nadjeebs, and shalt say: 'The secret of my Lord, the Nakeeb of every Nakeeb, and the Najeeb of every Najeeb; the secret of the twelve Nakeebs; the secret of the twenty-eight Nadjeebs; the secret of the forty Poles*; the secret of Mohammed ibn-Sinan iz-Zahiree; the secret of Abdullah ibn-Saba†; thy secret, O Nakeeb, and the secret of thy Nakeebship; thy secret, O Nadjeeb, and the secret of thy Nadjeebship [probably those on the right and left hand, or two others present].' Then thou shalt enter into convention with the one on thy right and on thy left, and say: 'We have drunk the secret of the Nakeebs and Nadjeebs, and thou hast drunk our secret, and we have drunk thy secret. May God make the knowledge of thy Lord easy to thy heart; may God continue thy drink, and cause thee to obtain thy wish; and may God deliver thee from thy sorrow and afflictions, and reckon with thee with an easy reckoning, and not a difficult one!' Then you will say: 'O brethren, let him who has a prayer pray; and he who has no prayer, let him say, Amen, for he prays who says Amen, and the acceptance and answer is with God; and our Lord, the prince of true believers, has said, When one of you has finished his prayer, let him raise his hand in supplication towards heaven.' Then you will read the passage, the words of the Most High‡: 'The apostle believeth in that which hath been sent down unto him from his Lord, and the faithful also. Every one of them believeth in God, and his angels, and his scriptures, and his apostles: we make no distinction at all between his apostles. And they say, We have heard, and do obey: we

* Section 35 of the Ansairee Book of Feasts, described by M. Catafago (Jour. Asiat. Feb. 1848), consists of the "Story of the Nakeeb Mohammed ibn-Sinan."

† The first to teach the divinity of Ali.

‡ Koran, ii. 285.

implore thy mercy, O Lord, for unto Thee must we return. God will not force any soul above its capacity: it shall have the good which it giveth, and it shall suffer the evil which it gaineth. O Lord, punish us not if we forget, or act sinfully. O Lord, lay not on us a burden like that which thou hast laid on those who have been before us; neither make us, O Lord, to bear what we have no strength to bear, but be favourable unto us, and spare us, and be merciful unto us. Thou art our patron, help us therefore against the unbelieving nations.' When Noah (and he is the manifest apostle) said: My Lord, make me to dwell in a blessed habitation, for thou art the best of those who cause to dwell! *To the ground.* The Masheyakhah [Manual of Sheikhs] is completed, praise be to God alone, and after him to the Ism and the Bab!"

The copyist then proceeds to give the date, and his own lineage, and the occasion when the book was written, namely, the ordination of his nephew.

'The three following documents are afterwards added by and for the same sheikh, but in worse handwriting; an excuse being added, that the writer had "no ink worth anything."

XXXI. "*We will write the contract* [entered into between the lad to be initiated and his Seyyid, lord, or Amm, 'uncle,' who teaches him the prayers, &c.]; *which is this:*—

"In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful! In the name of the ancient Maana, and the great Ism, and the lasting Door, and the high road of those rightly directed, and the eye of certainty, and the foundation of religion, I make between you (with your mutual consent, and with freedom of determination, with respect to what you are mutually agreed upon before these present notables) a free and not a constrained contract. And if he (the disciple) shall say: 'Make the contract,' say: You must keep rightly the ordinances of God, and tie by their halters the members created by him, that they may not act contrary to them.

"Now the rights due to the Seyyid from his son are, that he reveal not his secrets, nor disobey his commands, nor bear malice against him in his breast, nor uncover his veil [by publishing his doings], nor be friendly with his enemies, nor be hostile to his friends; and that he assist him all his days with eye, hand, and tongue. And the rights due to a son from his Seyyid are, good bringing up and proper instruction; and that he do not put hardships on him, nor teach him in a faulty way; and that he shall communicate to him what trustworthy persons have communicated, and warn him against all transgression and lusts. Now the words of a Seyyid against his son may be received, but not the words of a son against his Seyyid. Do you accept freely the conditions I have placed on you? And if they shall say, 'We accept,' say: O God, I call thee and thine angels to witness what these two have become bound by, of thy statutes and the walking in thine ordinances, and that they have become obedient to the fulfilment of thy covenant. I have made a contract between you, the contract of Ain, Meem, Seen, the weapons of the pious. And thou art he who art gracious to the true believers, and he who causeth vengeance to descend on the infidels and deniers of the truth. As he has said in his book* which was sent down on his prophet, the apostle: 'They who enter into convention with thee, enter into convention with God. The hand of God is above their hands [the convention being made by giving the hand]. Now he who violates the convention violates it to his own hurt, but he who fulfils what he has covenanted with God, God shall give him a great reward.'"

XXXII. This section contains the oath taken from a lad before he is initiated. *Rubric.* "Then he shall read the discourse to the disciple, after the question has been put to him. When the book is in his hand, thou shalt read

* Koran, xlviii. 10.

over him the Fatihah [opening chapter of the Koran], and shalt say: 'Now those who enter into convention with thee ['swear fealty:' *Sale*], enter into convention with God; the hand of God is over your hands. And he who violates the convention, violates it to his own hurt, but he who fulfils what he has covenanted with God, God will give him a great reward.'* Then thou shalt say: O righteous boy, and chosen disciple, may God dispose you to his obedience and acceptance; therefore tell me what your idea is, and what seems right to you after serious consideration, and what you require from your Seyyid? *Then he shall say:* My wish is that he would free my neck from the yoke of bondage, and direct me to the right knowledge of God, and deliver me from the darkness of blindness†, and grant me life everlasting. *Then thou shalt say:* Know (may God fit you to be rightly directed, and cause you to obtain the consummation of your wish!) that thou hast prepared thyself for the demand of a great matter, and an important discourse; for it is the mystery of mysteries, and the article of faith of the righteous; none but devout breasts and pure understandings can comprehend it, nor can any but sharp [as of sword] hearts, and first-rate [jewel-like] intellects receive it. For thy Lord Is-Sadik [Djaafar-is-Sadik] (from him is peace, and to him belongeth salutation) has said: If any one readily receives our instruction, it opens for him the door of his heart, so that he becomes an able man; but he who receives it with doubt and uncertainty will only by it be removed to a greater distance [from us]. God most high has said, 'We will place on thee a heavy saying.' *Then the lad* [walad, or disciple] *shall say:* Thou shalt find me patient, please God. *Then thou shalt say:* Know (may God most high help thee!) that what thou seekest from me is an honourable secret, and a

* Koran, xlviii. 10.

† Another word, "Shanbaweyeh," is here added, which my Mussulman teacher could not explain. It is not in the Kamoos, and is, he thinks, a mistake for "Shunbeh," or cold.

serious discourse, and an illustrious doctrine, and a weighty danger, which the mountains cannot bear, nor the people of error receive; and my mind will not let me reveal it, on account of the greatness of its dignity and honour: for it is cure and health to him who keeps it, and by it draws nigh to God, and reverences it, but a fatal poison to whoever reveals it, and discloses it to those who have no right to it; and it is a most difficult and weighty thing. Know, too, that if you shall know it, and doubt or uncertainty about it enter your mind, or if you divulge it or reveal it to those who have no portion in it nor right to it, you will be one of those who misplace things, who are the brethren of devils, and you will have merited through doing so the being changed into horrid forms, and being made to walk in vile envelopes. Have you not heard what has been reported from the mouth of our Lord, the prince of true believers, (may the remembrance of him be glorified and magnified!) that he said: Our doctrine is a difficult and weighty matter; no one can bear it but an angel who is allowed to approach near to God, or a prophet sent as an apostle, or a believer whose heart God has tried in knowledge and faith. Now your position is a free one before knowing this secret, but know that if you shall have known it, and shall reject it, or there enter thee with respect to it doubt and uncertainty, you will be transported into horrid shapes, and will be made to transmigrate continually, and will be tortured in every revolution of time; therefore consider what thou wilt choose. *Then the lad shall say:* I am firm in the knowledge of God, please God. *Then thou shalt say:* May God make thee firm in his firm word, in this life and the next; and may he make what thou shalt learn of the concealed secret of God most high to be kept secret by thee and not revealed! *Then he shall say:* Favour me, my lord, with the knowledge of God most high.

"*Then thou shalt say:* That which thou seekest from me

is a great matter, and a glorious doctrine, and an honourable secret, and a high discourse; and it is a weighty and difficult matter. Have you not heard what has been reported of Bahir-il-Ulm [Mohammed-il-Bakir, the fifth Imam] (from him is peace), how he said: Our secret is a concealed secret, a weighty and difficult matter; none can bear it but an angel who is permitted to approach near to God, or a prophet who is an apostle, or a believer whose heart God has tried in knowledge and faith; for there are many angels, and none of them can bear our doctrine but those who are permitted to approach near to God; and the prophets are many, but none of them can bear our doctrine but such of them as are apostles; and believers are many, but none of them can bear our doctrine but such as are tried. Now your position is a free one, before you hear it; but know that if you shall have heard it, and shall divulge it or reveal it to those who have no right to it, God will make thee to taste the heat of iron and its cold. Therefore consider in yourself what you will choose. *Then he shall say*: I am firm in the knowledge of God, please God most high. *Then thou shalt say:* May God most high make thee firm in the firm saying, in this life and the next, &c. &c.* Have you not heard what has been reported of the Aalim [Bahir-il-Ulm], (from him is peace), how that he said: Our saying is a weighty and difficult matter, a sense [such as the five senses] discerned: none can bear it but an angel, &c.* And in our saying is a concealed secret veiled in mystery; do not place it except in guarded breasts and secure hearts. He said, too: The bosoms of the free are the fortresses of secrets. He said, also: He who places knowledge with those to whom it does not belong, is iniquitous in his saying, and will repent of his act. He said, moreover: He who places knowledge with those to whom it does not belong, is as one who hangs pearls on

* The words following are precisely the same as those which have been given before in connexion with the preceding words.

the necks of swine. He said, also: Take care of divulging the secret, for the doing so cuts off property, and shortens life. He said, also: Whoever divulges our secrets, we will cause him to taste the heat of iron and its cold. Attend thou to this saying with thine intellect, and meditate on it with thine understanding; for thou art free in thy position before thou hearest this secret. Therefore consider what thou wilt choose; for after warning [neglected] there is no being wary; and the being transformed into horrid shapes only comes on a man after obedience, from doubt after certainty, and denial after confirmation. *Then he shall say:* I am firm in the knowledge of God most high. *Then thou shalt say:* May God make thee firm in the firm saying, in this life and the next, and cause what thou hearest of the concealed secret of God to be kept safe with thee, not divulged, and firm, not retracted! *Then he shall say:* Favour me, my lord, with the knowledge of God most high.

"*Then thou shalt say:* If thou be truthful in thy saying, and firm in these covenants, there is one thing which I command thee to do, and another which I prohibit thee from doing; and if thou shalt disobey one of these commands, it will be the cause of thy destruction, and you will leave the pale of faith, and return to the degrees of imperfection. *Then he shall say:* Make me know what that is, my lord. *Then thou shalt say:* Now the first command is to take care of your brethren, and to pay attention to them, and to mind them, and to continue to visit them, and do good to them, and keep up connexion with them; *and all that you desire for yourself, you must desire for them.* Know, too, that the fifth of your property absolutely belongs to them, every year. And you must observe prayer in its times, and give alms to those whose due it is, and be constant in performing the ordinances, and hasten to fulfil duties and requirements; and you must be obedient to your Seyyid, praying for him gratefully, remembering him; doing him good in all that you can, and

he may accept; abstaining from every wrong thing which he may abhor. Now the second command is to guard against injuring your brethren, or wronging any one of them; to abstain from divulging their faults, and to not act contrary to their wishes, but take care of hurting them. For know that blindness follows the looking at their Hhareems with an improper eye; and deafness follows the listening to backbiting and scandal against them; and leprosy and elephantiasis follow the making light of them, or lowering their position; and poverty and want follow the being miserly and covetous towards them; and there is no calamity, open or concealed, which does not follow the injuring them, for the cord of believers is united with the cord of their Lord; and his anger with their anger; and his pleasure with their pleasure. Avoid also lying and all forbidden acts, and iniquities and abominations open and secret. Now, if you have accepted what I have related to you, with a right acceptance, obediently, freely, without dislike, and without constraint, I will order your Seyyid (the boy's Amm) to agree to your petition in that in which is your deliverance; and to favour you with the lasting favour, and eternal life; and to bring you out of darkness and blindness, and cause you to enjoy the illumination of light; after he has taken from you God's promise and covenant, which was taken from his prophets and apostles. Do you then accept the conditions I have demanded of you? *Then the disciple shall say:* I accept them freely.

"*Then you will make known to him the religion and faith* [Deen and Imân, practice and faith], *after you have demanded sureties for him. And you will say before you swear him:* O God, I am guiltless of thy [the boy's] sin [or hurt, that is, injury to the lad if he sins]; for thou hast so commanded in thy book sent down on thy prophet, the apostle *, and hast said: 'When believing women come

* Koran, lx. 10.

unto you as refugees, try them: God well knoweth their faith. And if ye know them to be true believers, send them not back to the infidels.' Thou hast so commanded, and hast also said: Do not give knowledge to the people of knowledge, except after covenants and contracts.

"*Then thou shalt say:* Wallah, Billah, Tillah, and seven oaths by Allah; I have confidence in God, and in what you commit to me of the secret of God. I will not sell it nor divulge it, nor contend about it with the uninitiated, nor with respect to it make myself known to any one, except to a brother who makes himself known to me and I to him [by signs, &c.]; and if I do otherwise, be guiltless before God and his books and his apostles: and may God be party and witness to what I say! *Then say:* Wallah and Billàh, and a second Wallah, and seven oaths by God, a great oath, and by what was taken from the prophets of covenant and contract, I have confidence in God, and in what you commit to me of the secret of God, and will conceal all that I hear and know from my Seyyid, and will follow what he directs me to, and will abstain from what he forbids me; God is party and witness to what I say! *Then say:* Wallah and Billah, and three oaths by God, and seven oaths by God, and eighty oaths by God, forty standing and forty sitting; I have confidence in God, and what you commit to me of the secret of God. I will not sell it, nor divulge it, nor command its being written for those who have no right to it, neither in your lifetime nor after your death; neither in a state of covetousness, nor in a state of acceptance, nor in a state of hardship; I am also under these conditions, and will abstain from all that may hurt my brethren, from killing any one, from fornication, and from what is forbidden; and from corruption, and lying, and aiding the unjust, and usury, and the like; and I will not reveal what you have discovered to me of the secret of God to any of God's creation, except to a brother of my brethren, who shall make himself known to me and I to him; and if

I act contrary to this, be guiltless before God and his books and his apostles! God is party and witness to what I say; he will violate the compact with him who violates it!

"*Then say to him:* Arise! God make thee of the number of true believers, who praise God in the earth, and are rightly directed through the light of their Lord.

"*Then you will deliver him to his ten brethren, and the sureties, and they shall swear him, and deliver him to the Naheeb, to his Seyyid, who shall cause him to drink the secret of the two* [*the two masses*]; *after he shall have read them, and the imâm have read a passage, and they have bended in adoration and prayed while adoring. And to the end. And he shall read the Fatihah to the people of the way and the people of the truth, as shall be convenient. Then the blessed entrance* [that is, then the lad becomes in all things one of the initiated]; and praise be to God alone, and may his favours be on the best of his creation, Mohammed, and on his good and pure family! Invoke great peace on him till the day of resurrection and judgment. Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds!

"Now, the foregoing is from the words of the well-directed, aided, and rightly guided teacher, the Hippocrates of his age and Aristotle of his time; the illustrious lad, and favoured desired one; the copious rain, and greatly learned one; the chief Seyyid, and precious hero; the most beloved and rare sheikh, and glorious lion and well-bred falcon; our dear cousin and cherished desired one; the Sheikh Hassan, son of the Sheikh Ramadan: may God grant him favour and the obtaining of his desire and wishes, and cause him to attain the world of those that attain! Amen.

"We have written this at the ordination of our dear nephew, Sheikh Ali, son of Sheikh Eed."

XXXIII. Sermon, called the Khabr, or information. It is full of mistakes and in wretched handwriting; with bad grammar and most imperfect construction.

"In the name of God the compassionate, the merciful.

The information as to what is lawful and unlawful above the myrtle tree is derived from authority. Hear, O brethren. May God give you good-morning, and give you an evening of acceptance and felicity! [common morning and evening salutations among the Ansaireeh]. Our Lord Djaafar, son of Mohammed-is-Sadik, said that on the making mention of him the talker should be silent, and on the making mention of God should be silent and attentive; and that a man should keep the ordinances of God most high, and take the inner doctrine from those advanced in learning; and that he should abstain from all that is wrong and iniquitous, by night and by day. And it is said in the Khabr [information] derived from the possessor of miracles and power [Ali], that he said: He who enters my assembly [or house] and speaks in it of anything but the remembrance of me, I have no part in him, nor he in me; and he who is profuse in talking above the myrtle shall remain mute of tongue; and he who is full of vain talk and backbiting and scandal, God shall destroy his good works. And he who makes a display of finery to outshine his brethren, God most high shall bring him down and lower him; and he who unjustly accuses his brother is as he who takes a stick and beats me with it; and he who assails the reputation of his brother's family is as if he broke down my house with his hand; and he who is proud and violent to his brethren shall have in my sight sins as weighty as the lofty mountains; and he who puts himself out of his place shall be oppressed with the weight of sin; and he who causes the imâm to retract his words, contradicts God and his apostle; and he who intends anything but prayer, his prayer is unlawful; and he who enters with the intention of eating and drinking, and not with the intention of praying and worshipping, his work is as the scattered motes in the sunbeam; and he who speaks contrary to obedience has with me no merchandise; and he who speaks at the time of calling to prayer, his tongue shall be unable to articulate at the time of death.

"Now it is incumbent on every well-instructed believer, when he enters the sittings of the people of the doctrine and Unitarian religion, that he should be truthful in his intention with respect to God, praising God at the time of praise, and saying 'Amen' to God at the time of saying Amen; and that he should not speak of worldly things; and that he should make himself the least of those at the sitting. And he should not doubt, nor associate any one with the Compassionate One, nor abhor any one of his brethren. And his attention should be fixed on prayer, repenting towards God, and desiring his favour. And he should be contented with the property that may accrue to him, be it much or little. Then, through the fairness of the truthfulness of his love, and the purity of his intention, his faults will fall from off him, though their number be as the sand. But the hypocritical man, when he enters into the sitting of the people of the doctrine and of the Unitarian religion, seeks to eat and drink, and distracts the attention of those on his right and left, and will doubt his Lord and his brethren, and will tell deceiving news, and keep apart from the preaching, and conceal the good things that he may see [in his brethren]. So in the contrariety of his intention, and the smallness of his love, God most high shall load him with great and weighty sins. Know, too, O brethren, (may God strengthen us and you!) that you must take care of having dirty shirts [at times of solemn meeting], which God has tried the people of sorrow with [unwashed clothes are the sign of mourning with the Ansaireeh], which they had not to put on except after knowing the truth and rejecting it, and hearing the word of the imâm and disobeying it, and engaging in what is wrong [that is, none suffer calamity except from having been guilty of some disobedience, as follows]: for there is no infirmity attacking the body, such as leprosy, and elephantiasis, and idiotcy, and pleurisy, and dumbness, and deafness, and poverty, and sickness, and accident, nor any pain, but what arises from a failure in fulfilling what

is due to one's brethren, and from disobedience to the Compassionate One. Know, moreover, O brethren, that God has rendered unlawful to his servants, the true believers,* joking and intermixing [probably with outsiders], and taking and giving, and selling and buying, and partnership and renting, and doubt and backbiting and slander, and separation and disputing and harsh looks, and the avoiding one another, and hatred and malice and envy, and playing cards, and evil surmisings, and the detracting from the dignity of sheikhs [literally, children of the chimneys, or houses of liberal men]; and the putting on shoes, and throwing the aba [outer cloak] over the shoulder, and carrying arms [all this at a solemn meeting]. Moreover, he who makes a mock of the poor and wretched, and him who is imperfectly instructed in religion, assails religion. All usury is unlawful; and the removing persons from their places [at the meeting]; and the wearing dresses like those of outsiders, such as a black handkerchief†, or a blue turban, or thimble of bone, or two-edged knife; and the wearing a long robe without slits‡; and raising the eyes at the time of worship; and worshipping before the imâm worships, and rising before the imâm rises; and raising the voice above the voice of the imâm; according to the words of the Most High§: 'O true believers, raise not your voices above the

* A word occurs here which is evidently written wrongly. The next word is "opposers," and the passage may mean that God forbids the following matters to be engaged in "with" outsiders. Or the obscure word may mean "except," and the sense be that God forbids entirely what follows, and that all will obey except the disobedient. If so the buying and selling unjustly is meant, one would think, or buying and selling in the case of sheikhs.

† Such as is put round the head by Christians, black being the colour till lately used by them compulsorily (with other like colours); and being originally the colour peculiar to the Abbasides of Bagdad, the enemies of the house of Ali. The blue turban is also worn by Christians.

‡ The Ansairee men wear long shirts, but open on the side up to the hips, having thus a disagreeable and indecent appearance.

§ Koran, xlix. 2.

voice of the prophet; neither speak loud unto him in discourse, as ye speak loud unto one another, lest your works become vain, and ye perceive it not.' The aiding the unjust is also unlawful; and the continually saying, 'This was said,' and 'That was said;' also trafficking and shopkeeping [or acting as merchants]; and telling this story and alleging that tradition; and an Osmanlee shirt*; and long mustachios; and the hair of the armpits; and the buttoning of buttons†; and trimming up the sleeves; and cracking the fingers; and combing the beard with the hand.‡ Tobacco also is forbidden, for it is blamed above the myrtle.§

"Know, O brethren, that God has ordained to his servants, the true believers, in the times of prayer, purity of intention and right deeds, and the cleansing of the heart, and mutual friendship, and your forgiving one another; and if there is any enmity or hatred between any one and his brother in respect of worldly matters, he must forgive him.' And you must make your love to one another pure, O brethren, and seek pardon and forgiveness, according to the saying of our Lord Il Aalim [Mohammed-il-Bahir], (from him is peace): A believer does not become such really till he desires for his brother what he desires for himself, and dislikes in his case what he would dislike for himself. Know too, my brethren, that your brother, the master of this sitting [some sheikh or chief person at whose house it is held], has assembled you only for prayers, and to ascribe unity to God (may he be exalted and glorified!); for God most high has said in his precious

* Which has not the long sleeves of the Ansairee shirt; for of this last the part under the wrist is lengthened out greatly, until it terminates in a point.

† This, like many other things thrown loosely together in this "sermon," is not generally attended to by the Ansaireeh.

‡ Some of these directions, like preceding ones, seem to refer only to the times of meeting.

§ This shows that the MS. belongs to the Shemseen sect, whose sheikhs do not smoke.

book*: 'And meditate on thy Lord in thine own mind, with humility and fear, and without loud speaking, morning and evening; and be not one of the negligent.' That is to say, at the times of prayer it is not permitted to any one to have in his breast any matter which has not reference to God; but all the members must be employed only in the remembrance of God (may he be praised and exalted!). Make then your intentions pure, till the intention shall be but as one intention. And know, O brethren, that you have put me forward to pray for you, who am the meanest and most despicable, and poorest and least among you; and I have no power to be your imâm, but, as a slave and the least of servants, I serve you in lowliness and meanness, without lordship or self-exaltation; for our Lord Abu-Saeed, in the book called 'That which comprises the knowledge of Fetwas† [or the decisions of religious doctors], has said: It is not permitted to any one to take precedence in an assembly, if he knows that at the sitting there is one better instructed than himself, except with his pleasure and permission; and I testify with respect to myself, that I am the least of you as to knowledge and good deeds, and the most full of faults and iniquity, and errors and mistakes. But I hope from God, and from the sea of your universal benevolence, that you will forgive me, and help me with your prayers. It may be God will accept our and your prayers. My head touches the dust on which your feet have trodden, and here, as before God, I kiss your feet; may God forgive him who forgives! *Here ends the Khabr.* May my Lord be exalted! We all of us say, Amen!"

* Koran, vii. 204. † "Kitab-il-Hawi Ala Ulm-il-Fetawi."

CHAP. X.

EXTRACTS FROM PUBLISHED ANSAIREE DOCUMENTS.

In this chapter I shall give translations of the most important of the published documents concerning the Ansairee religion; and first of the Ansairee catechism, as the most complete and interesting. This was sent, with a French version, to the King of Prussia, by M. Catafago, dragoman of the Prussian Consul-General at Beyrout.* As I have had no opportunity of seeing the original MS., my translation is made from copious extracts published in the Journal of the German Oriental Society.† These are in the German language, and made by Dr. Wolff from a copy of the catechism lent to him by M. Catafago during his stay at Beyrout. I have added some notes where I have thought them desirable. It will be seen, on comparing this catechism with the sketch I have given of my MS., the "Manual of Sheikhs," that the arrangement and contents are in the main the same. Even single expressions are nearly identical, and would probably be found to be exactly so could the two Arabic texts be compared. The catechism has the air of being genuine, and, in any case, most certainly contains the Ansairee doctrines and formularies found in their various books. The title only, the "Book of Instruction in the Ansairee Religion," seems open to suspicion. Perhaps it does not belong to the MS. as it once stood. Dr. Wolff proceeds as follows: —

* Jahresbericht der Deutschen Morgenländ. Gesell. 1845-6, p. 130.

† Vol. iii. p. 302.

THE book is in thirty-eight leaves, large octavo, and is called the Book of Instruction in the Ansairee Religion.

The introduction contains an invocation of the eternal God, and a thanksgiving "for the communication of his divine secret, and the truth of the holy religion;" which consists in the perception of his great Name, and of his holy Door, through the person of the Abd-in-Noor, which he has assumed for the sake of his saints, who know him; also a thanksgiving for all the benefits received from God. Hereupon follows the two portions of the catechism; called, the one theoretical, which speaks of instruction, and the other practical, which speaks of customs and ceremonies. The first, or theoretical part, contains the following questions and answers: —

I. Who created us?—*Ans.* Ali son of Abu-Taleb.

II. Whence do we know that Ali is God?—*Ans.* Through his own testimony, given in a public discourse held from the pulpit.

(In the discourse which is now given, it is said among other things, "I am the Lord of lords, who commands life and death, who begat Jesus in the womb of his mother Mary, who sent the apostles," &c.)

III. Who has called us to the perception of our Lord? — *Ans.* Mohammed, as he himself said in his discourse which ends thus, "He (Ali) is my Lord and yours."

IV. If Ali is God, how did he take man's nature?— *Ans.* He did not take it, but he concealed himself in Mohammed in the period of his change of shapes, and took the name of Ali.

V. How often has our Lord changed his form, and shown himself in the likeness of man? *Ans.* Seven times.

a.	He took the name of	Abel,	and took	Adam	as his Veil.	
b.	„	„	Seth	„	Noah	„
c.	„	„	Joseph	„	Jacob	„
d.	„	„	Joshua	„	Moses	„
e.	„	„	Asaf	„	Solomon	„
f.	„	„	Peter	„	Jesus	„
g.	„	„	Ali	„	Mohammed	„

VI. How could he so conceal and manifest himself? — *Ans.* That is the mystery of the transformation, which God alone knows, as he himself says.

(Then follow passages cited from the Koran and Bible.)

VII. Will he yet once more manifest himself?—*Ans.* Yes, as he is, without any transformation, in pomp and glory.

VIII. What is the divine appearance?—*Ans.* It is the appearance of the Creator by means of the veiling himself in human form, and the best of sheaths within a sheath.

IX. Explain it more exactly. — *Ans.* As the Maana entered into the Door, it concealed itself under the name, and took it for itself, as our Lord Djaafar-is-Sadik has said.

X. What are the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab? — *Ans.* They are an inseparable Trinity, as one says, — "In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful." The word God signifies the Maana; the words compassionate and merciful denote the Name and the Door.

XI. How did the Maana create the Ism; and how did the latter create the Bab? — *Ans.* The substance of substances produced the Name out of the light of his unity.

XII. Are the Maana and the Bab separable from the Ism? — *Ans.* No: they are with it — they cannot be separated from it.

XIII. What names have the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab; and how are they distinguished?—*Ans.* These names are threefold. 1. Figurative; 2. Essential; 3. Attributive. The figurative belong to the Maana; the attributive are those of which the Ism has made use, but which belong peculiarly to the Maana. As when we say, the Gracious One, the Compassionate One, the Creator.

XIV. What are the sixty-three names of the Ism, which, spiritually taken, denote the Maana, and personally the Ism, — those of which the Godhead has made use to manifest himself in the persons of the prophets and apostles?—*Ans.* Among the first of these sixty-three names are Adam, Enoch, Kenân; then Edrees, Noah, Herd,

Solomon, Lot, Abraham. The last of all is "the Imâm Mohammed son of Hassan, the demonstration."

XV. What are the attributive names of the Ism, which peculiarly belong to the Godhead? — *Ans.* God, the Gracious One, Light, the Lofty One, &c.; in all forty names.

XVI. What are the mysterious names of the Ism?

1. (Here follow the enigmatical letters at the commencement of some chapters of the Koran; as A. L. M. of the second, K. H. Y. A. S. of the nineteenth, &c.)

2. In the Pentateuch, Mad al Mad (Gen. xvii. 2).

3. In Gospels, Paraclet.

4. In Psalms, Redeemer.

5. In Koran, Mohammed.

XVII. What are the personal names of the Ism? — *Ans.* Adam, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Solomon, Jesus, Mohammed Abdullah the apostle of God, and Mohammed ibn-Hassan.

XVIII. What are the abstract names of the Ism? — *Ans.* The will, the perception, the might, &c.

XIX. What are the appellations of the Ism in the period of Abraham?

XX. What in the period of Moses?

XXI. What in the period of Mohammed? — Here pretty well the same names are given as in the Druse books.

[NOTE.—They have been given above, Chap. V.]

XXII. What are the names of the great and holy Dopr (Bab) of God? (Again the same names as in the Druse books.)

XXIII. What are the names of the personifications of the Bab in the books of the Unitarians? (By which the Ismaeleeh, or also the Druses, are to be understood.) (Here follow fifty-five names, such as throne, water, door, &c. &c.)

XXIV. What are the names of the six spiritual sta-

tions? — *Ans.* In the first Gabriel, and his orphans, Michael, &c.

XXV. What in the second? — *Ans.* Yayeel ibn-Fatin and his orphans.

XXVI. What in the third? — *Ans.* Ham ibn-Koosh.

XXVII. What in the fourth? — *Ans.* Dan ibn-Sabaoot.

XXVIII. What in the fifth? — *Ans.* Abdullah ibn-Simaan.

XXIX. What in the sixth? — *Ans.* Rozabah ibn-il-Marzaban.

XXX. What in the Persian periods? (Here the names that follow are all Persian.)

XXXI. What is the Bab also called? — *Ans.* The perfect soul, the Holy Ghost, Gabriel, &c.

[NOTE.—Dr. Wolff has wrongly translated the expression In-nefs il-Kullee, which is, as I have rendered it, "the universal soul," the name by which the second Druse minister is called.]

XXXII. What is the name of the Bab and its orphans in the eleven appearances which God has given us grace to perceive? — *Ans.* In the first onr Lord Salmân and his orphans.

XXXIII. What in the second? — *Ans.* Abu-Abd-ir-Kalman.

XXXIV. What in the third? — *Ans.* Abu-al-Ula.

XXXV. What in the fourth? — *Ans.* Abu-Khalid.

XXXVI. What in the fifth? — *Ans.* Yahya ibn-Maamar.

XXXVII. What in the sixth? — *Ans.* Abu-Mohammed Djabir.

XXXVIII. What in the seventh? — *Ans.* Abu-Ismacel Mohammed.

XXXIX. What in the eighth? — *Ans.* Abu-Abdallah al Mufdal.

[NOTE.—Properly Mufudhal.]

XL. What in the ninth? — *Ans.* Abu-Djaafar Mohammed.

XLI. What in the tenth? — *Ans.* Abu-al-Kasim.

XLII. What in the eleventh?—*Ans.* Khatib Mohammed.

[NOTE.—Here Dr. Wolff has evidently made a mistake from glancing quickly at the manuscript. The Bab given in my MS. is Abu-Shuaib Mohammed ibn-Nusair in-Numeyree, the name of the last of whose orphans is given as Ahmed ibn-*Mohammed* ibn-il-Furat il *Katib* (or scribe); which name Dr. Wolff has taken by an oversight as that of the Bab.]

XLIII. What are the names of our Lord, Emeer il Moomeneen, in the various languages?—*Ans.* The Arabs have given him the name of Ali; he himself has taken the name of Aristotle. In the New Testament he is called Elias, which means Alī. The Indians call him Kankara.

XLIV. What are the other names of our Lord, with their meaning and explanation?—*Ans.* The elements, the law, the faith, the victory, &c.

XLV. What is the apparent name of the mother of our Lord?—*Ans.* Fatimeh.

[NOTE.—Fatimeh was the name also of his wife, the daughter of Mohammed.]

XLVI. What are the names of his brothers?—*Ans.* Hamza, Talib, &c.

XLVII. What are the human names of the children of our Lord?—*Ans.* Hassan, Hosein; his daughters, Teynah, Umm Kulthoom.

XLVIII. Where is his grave?—*Ans.* In Dakwat il Beyd, west of Cufa.

XLIX. What are the peculiar names belonging to him in appearance (in iz-Zahir)?—*Ans.* The word, eternity &c. (twenty-nine names).

L. Why do we call our Lord Emeer in-Nahl (Prince of Bees)?—*Ans.* The true believers are like bees, which seek the best flowers. Therefore is he so called.

LI. What name did the beings give him who inhabited the world before men?—*Ans.* Al-Hoo. "He."

LII. What are the spirits called who inhabited the world before men?—*Ans.* They are the Djann, and the Bann, and the Tumm, and the Ramm, and the Djân.

LIII. How many worlds are there?—*Ans.* Many; God alone knows them; among them are the great luminous world, and the little earthly world, the residence of men.

LIV. Which is the great world?—*Ans.* The heaven, which is the light of lights.

LV. Which is the little world?—*Ans.* The earth.

LVI. What does the great world include?—*Ans.* The seven hierarchies. The Abwâb, the Aytâm, the Nadjeebs, the Naheebs, the Mukhtasseen, the Mukhliseen, and the Mumtahaneen.

LVII. What are the names of the degrees of the seven hierarchies?—*Ans.* Of the first, which numbers 400 doors, they are the names, the lights, the clouds, the suns, &c.

[NOTE.—I give the names of the respective degrees from my MS. Of the Abwâb they are: "the doors, the veils, the verse (of Koran), the lights, the suns, the firmaments, the clouds."]

LVIII. What in the second hierarchy?—*Ans.* The 500 orphans, who have seven degrees; namely, the stars, the comets, the thunder, &c.

[NOTE.—The east, the west, the moons, the new moons, the stars, the thunders, the lightnings.]

LIX. What of the third?—*Ans.* That of Naheebs, who are 600, and have seven degrees; namely, prayer, alms, fasts, pilgrimage, the Hadjrah, the holy war, the invocation (namely, of those who are considered the highest prophets).

[NOTE.—These names are the same in my MS.]

LX. What of the fourth?—*Ans.* Of the Nadjeebs, 700 in number, and in seven degrees; the mountains, seas, clouds, &c.

[NOTE.—The mountains, rainy clouds, seas, rivers, winds, clouds, thunderbolts.]

LXI. What of the fifth?—*Ans.* Of the Mukhtasseen, 800 in number, in seven degrees; as, night, day, morning, &c.

[NOTE.—Night, day, morning, Ushee (time an hour and a half after sunset), travelling in the morning, the afternoon, floods.]

LXII. What of the sixth? — *Ans.* Mukhliseen, 900 in number, in seven degrees; as, camels, bees, birds, &c.

[NOTE.—Cattle, beasts, camels, bees, birds, cloisters, conventicles.]

LXIII. What in the seventh? — *Ans.* The Mumtahaneen, 1100 in number, in seven degrees; houses, temples, vines, &c. These seven hierarchies make together forty-nine degrees.

[NOTE.—Houses, places of worship, palm trees, grapes, pomegranates, olives, figs.]

LXIV. How were these hierarchies called in the world of light, before their appearance in the earthly world? — *Ans.* They had other names in heaven.

[NOTE.—I will add what is said in my MS.*, because of its absurdity and curiosity: —

"Now these names belonged to them (the degrees) previously, before these beneficial things, such as figs and olives and palm trees and grapes, and like names mentioned in the words of the Koran, were called so by us in the world. So that these names became the names of these beneficial things in the world over-against the names of the degrees of the hierarchies in the luminous world. Thus the words of the Koran in their outer meaning (iz-Zahir) denote the beneficial things of this world, and in their inner meaning (il-Batin) the names of the degrees and of the hierarchies of the luminous world."]

LXV. What does the little earthly and human world contain? — *Ans.* 14,000 near ones, 15,000 sacrifices, 15,000 cherubim, 16,000 spirits, 17,000 saints, 18,000 hermits, 19,000 listeners, 20,000 followers; in all, 119,000 beings.

LXVI. What are the names of the Nadjeebs of the little or earthly world? (Here follow twenty-five names, of which the first is Abu-Ayoob, and the last Abdullah ibn-Saba.)

LXVII. How are the Nadjeebs called in the world of light? — *Ans.* The lion, virgin, balance, crab, bull, &c. (in all twenty-seven names).

[NOTE.—Probably twenty-eight, as in my MS.; being the names of the twenty-eight mansions of the moon.]

LXVIII. How is it that the Nadjeebs have two names,

one in the earthly world, and the other in the world of light? (The answer is only that they have just two names.)

LXIX. What are the names of those who have been prophets, and how many of them are there? — *Ans.* Seventeen. The first is called Ibn-il-Haratee (Zeid-ibn-il-Harithee), and the last Omar ibn-el-Hamak.

LXX. How are the twenty-five orphans called? (These are utterly unimportant names.)

LXXI. How many books have the Unitarians? — *Ans.* 114.

LXXII. What is the Koran? — *Ans.* The forerunner of the appearance of our Lord in human form.

LXXIII. Who taught Mohammed the Koran? — *Ans.* Our Lord, who is the Maana, by the mouth of Gabriel.

LXXIV. What is the token of our brethren the true believers? — *Ans.* A. M. S. A. means Ali; M. Mohammed; S. Salsal.

LXXV. Is it true that the Messiah was crucified, as the Christians assert? — *Ans.* No; the Jews were deceived by a resemblance. (Kor. iii. 163.)

LXXVI. What is the mass? — *Ans.* The consecration of the wine, which is drunk to the health of the Nakeeb or Nadjeeb.

(Die Weihung des Weines, den man trinkt auf die Gesundheit des Nakib's oder Nadschib's.)

[NOTE.—This expression, "drink to the health of," is probably due to a faulty translation of Dr. Wolff's.]

LXXVII. What is the offering (Kurbân)? — *Ans.* The consecration of the bread, which the true believers take in hand for the souls of their brethren, and on that account the mass is read.

LXXVIII. Who reads the mass, and brings the offering? — *Ans.* Your great imams and preachers.

LXXIX. What is the great secret (mystery) of God? — *Ans.* The flesh and the blood, of which Jesus has said: "This is my flesh and my blood; eat and drink thereof, for it is eternal life."

LXXX. Where do the souls of your brethren, the true believers, go when they leave their graves? — *Ans.* Into the great world of light.

LXXXI. What will happen to the godless and polytheists? — *Ans.* They will have all torments to suffer in all ages.

LXXXII. What is the mystery of the faith of the Unitarians? What is the mystery of mysteries and chief article of faith of the true believers? — *Ans.* It is the veiling of our Lord in light, that is, in the eye of the sun, and his manifestation in his servant Abd-in-Noor.

LXXXIII. What will happen to those who doubt this mystery, after they have once acknowledged it? — *Ans.* They will be reprobated, &c.

LXXXIV. What are the stipulations which the believer must enter on, if he will receive the secret of secrets? — *Ans.* He must, before all things, assist his brethren with all his means; he must give them the fifth part of his goods: he must pray at the appointed hours; fulfil his obligations; give to all their dues; obey his Lord, invoke him, thank him, often pronounce his name, in all points submit himself to his will, and keep himself from everything that may displease him.

LXXXV. What is the second thing which the believer must keep himself from?—*Ans.* From affronting or injuring his brethren.

LXXXVI. Is the believer allowed to make known to any one the secret of secrets?—*Ans.* Only to those of his religion, else will he lose the favour of God.

LXXXVII. What is the first mass?—*Ans.* It is that which is spoken before the prayer of Nurooz.

LXXXVIII. What is the prayer of Nurooz?—*Ans.* The words of consecration of the wine in the chalice.

LXXXIX. Say that prayer. Among other things, it is said: "Drink of this pure wine, for one day its lights will be covered with thick clouds."

[NOTE.—This translation differs from the one given by me, Chap. IX.,

which was made with the assistance of a competent Mussulman sheikh of Cairo, and is I believe the true one.]

XC. What is the consecrated wine called which the believers drink?—*Ans.* Abd-in-Noor.

XCI. Wherefore so?—*Ans.* Because God has manifested himself in the same.

XCII. What is the concealed secret of God, which stands between the K and N?—*Ans.* Light, according to his word: "Let there be light, and there was light."

XCIII. What is light?—*Ans.* The eternal Maana, which is concealed in light.

XCIV. If our Lord is concealed in light, where does he manifest himself?—*Ans.* In the wine, as is said in the Nurooz.

XCV. Why does the believer direct his face, when he prays, towards the sun?—*Ans.* Know that the sun is the light of lights.

XCVI. Why do we say that our Lord makes turnings (transmigrations) and revolutions?—The answer, which is no answer, is: He does so, and manifests himself periodically in all revolutions and periods, from Adam to the son of Abu-Talib.

XCVII. What do the outer and inner word denote?—*Ans.* The inner, the Godhead of our Lord; the outer, his manhood. Outwardly we say that he is spoken of as "Our Lord, Ali son of Abu-Talib:" and this denotes inwardly the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab; one gracious and compassionate God.

XCVIII. Which of our sheikhs spread our faith in all lands?—*Ans.* Abu-Abdullah Al Husein ibn-Hamdân.

XCIX. Why do we hear the name of the Khasaibis?—*Ans.* Because we follow the teaching of our sheikh Abu-Abdullah Al Husein ibn-Hamdân il Khasaibi.

[NOTE.—I have always written this word Khaseebee (the absence of vowel points admitting of both readings), as my lad says that the word is so pronounced by his people.]

C. Let me know the names of the persons of prayer and the obligatory and free-will times of the same?—*Ans.*

The first obligatory time is midday; the prayer at this time has eight prostrations: the second that of five hours after midday; this prayer has four prostrations: the third is of sunset, with five prostrations: the fourth of midnight, with four prostrations: the fifth of the dawn, with two prostrations. Between every two of these obligatory times of prayer are those of free will.

This is the theoretical part of the catechism. In the second, practical portion, there is first given a general formula of prayer; then follows a formula for mass. According to this, when the cup is given, these words are spoken: "Drink, my brother, of my cup; may its contents be holiness and health to you! Let me drink of your cup; may God let you sometime drink of the hand of Salsal, to quench your thirst in the day of the great thirst!"

[NOTE.—Here again I suspect that the translation of Dr. Wolff is erroneous.]

At this time also the healths are drunk of Ali, Mohammed, Abu-Abdullah, and the sheikh for the time being (i. e. the present head of the sect); during which Sooras from the Koran, as that of the Mountain, are read; also there are many prostrations.

[NOTE.—The expression, "drink to the health of Ali," &c., is doubtless an erroneous translation. See above.]

After the formula of mass follows the formula which must be said on reception into the community. According to this, among other things, to the question "What do you wish?" it must be answered: "I desire that my lord would make my head free from the yoke of slavery; that he will direct me into the true perception of the Lord, that he will take me out of the darkness of delusion, and will give me to live in everlasting life." At the conclusion of this formula, the proselyte, who at each question must declare that he will learn to know the Highest Being, is admonished to avoid lies and all wicked actions. At the oath, which he takes after a set formula, all the assembly throw themselves upon their knees. The conclusion of the formulary is a

formula for marriage settlements. A kind of calendar of festivals follows as an appendix.

[NOTE.—Has Dr. Wolff mistaken, through haste, the Akâd, or contract between the boy and his Seyyid, for a contract for marriage?]

I propose next to give a translation of the paper sent by M. Catafâgo to the "Journal Asiatique*," because I have had frequently to refer to it, and it may not easily be procurable by English readers.

Letter to M. Wildenbruch, Prussian Consul-General.

Sir,—I have the honour to announce to you that I have just made the discovery and acquisition of an Ansairee MS. of the greatest interest.

This manuscript, in 410 pages 4to, is entitled "Collection of Feasts, Proofs, and Veritable Traditions, with their signs and significations, which ought not to be revealed either to father or mother, or brother or sister; composed by the very illustrious and virtuous learned young sheikh, the source of goodness, and of the Unitarian religion, of virtue and devotion, Abu-Saeed Maymoon, son of Kasim at-Tabaranee. May God sanctify his soul, and illuminate his tomb!"

After this title the author commences with a preface, which is a solemn profession of faith, in which he renders thanks to Ali as God, in whom he distinguishes three principles. 1. The divinity, properly so called, or the essence of beings. 2. Light, or the veil (Hedjâb), which manifests itself to men under their own form, in the person of the apostles and prophets. 3. The Door, Bab, which is the faithful spirit or water.

After this preface the author passes to the subject of the work, and declares that he had received these facts, by tradition, from one of the twelve imams, called Al Aalim, at Tripoli of Syria, in the year 398 of the Hedjrah (A.D.

* Feb. 1848. Notice sur les Ansériens.

1007). He divides the feasts of his co-religionists into two categories—Arab and Persian; and gives an enumeration of them, reserving the treatment of each one in particular, and the exposition of the prayers, histories, discourses, &c., which belong to each of them, for the body of the work.

Although the simple titles of the chapters contained in this volume are not sufficient to give an idea of the interest which this work offers, nevertheless I will transcribe the list according to the order established by the author himself: —

I. History of the month of Ramadan, after the traditions of our lords. May peace be with them!

II. Prayer of the month of Ramadan.

III. Of the feast called Fitr.

IV. Discourse of the feast of Fitr.

V. Prayer of the feast of Fitr.

VI. Of the feast of the sacrifice (Adha).

VII. Prayer of the same.

VIII. Explanation of the seventy names, given in his dwelling, by Abu-Ali of Busra, at Shiraz, A.H. 327, (A.D. 938).

IX. Discourse of the feast of Adha.

X. History of the feast of Gadeer, and its virtues.

XI. Poem of the Gadeer, by the Lord Abu-Abdullah al Khousseibi.*

XII. Prayer.

XIII. Discourse of the feast of Gadeer.

XIV. Another discourse for the same feast.

XV. Discourse of the Gadeer, pronounced by our Lord, the Prince of true believers.

XVI. Idem.

XVII. History of Il Kahree.

XVIII. Of the feast of Mubahileh.

XIX. Of the transfigurations (of the Deity).

* My lad says that his people pronounce the word Khaseebee as I have written it.

XX. Of the letter *Cam*, which has a mystic signification in the transfigurations (Tadjallee).

XXI. Prayer of the feast of Mubahileh.

XXII. Another prayer.

XXIII. Of the prayer of the bed.

XXIV. Poem of the feast of the bed.

XXV. Prayer of the feast of the bed.

XXVI. Of the feast of Aashoor.

XXVII. The day of Kerbela (followed by three poems).

XXVIII. Absence and manifestation of the Divinity.

XXIX. History of Tafoof.

XXX. Visitation of day of Aashoor.

XXXI. Another visitation.

XXXII. Slaughter of Dalam. (May Allah curse him!)

XXXIII. Prayer of the day of the slaughter of Dalam.

XXXIV. Mid-Shaban, or the last day of the Khaseebee year.

XXXV. History of the Naheeb Mohammed ibn-Sinan.

XXXVI. Visitation called Numeyreyeh.

XXXVII. A second visitation.

XXXVIII. A third visitation.

XXXIX. Prayer of Mid-Shaban.

XL. History of Zalâl and Bâl. May Allah curse both of them!

XLI. History of Mid-Shaban.

XLII. History of Christmas Eve *, which is the twenty-fourth day of December of the Greek calendar; or the birth-day of the Lord, the Messiah, of the holy, pure, and spotless Virgin, Mary, daughter of Amran.

[NOTE.—In appearance, so the Arabic given by M. Catafago in this case.]

XLIV. Prayer of the feast of Christmas.

XLV. The 17th of March, extracted from the book of the luminous transmigrations and revolutions.

XLVI. Prayer of the 17th of March.

* That is, the commencement of Christmas-day in the East.

XLVII. Of the Nurooz, which is the fourth of April, and the first of the Persian year.

XLVIII. History of the chaplet.

XLIX. History of the inner meaning of the Nurooz.

L. Idem.

LI. History of the Nurooz, and of the good and alms-giving which one ought to perform on it.

LII. Of the Mihrdjan and Nurooz.

LIII. Prayer to the sun.

LIV. Prayer of the Nurooz.

LV. Discourse of the Nurooz.

LVI. Prayer of the Mihrdjan.

LVII. Another prayer for the Mihrdjan.

Such are the matters contained in this work. I have thought it right to give them according to the order followed by the author; but it is only by reading the work itself that one can appreciate its importance. It leaves nothing to be desired in details, and makes fully known the religion of the Ansaireeh.

I am led to believe that, with the aid of this manuscript and of the catechism which you already possess, one could do for the Ansairee religion what M. De Sacy has done for the religion of the Druses. Meanwhile, I will attempt to translate the most interesting passages, the manuscript being too voluminous to allow me to translate it entirely, as I should have desired.

In the hope that you will deign to indicate to me the course I should take, &c. &c.

I am, &c.

J. CATAFAGO.

OF THE EVE OF CHRISTMAS AND ITS VIRTUES.

CHRISTMAS-EVE * is the twenty-fourth of December; it is the last day of the Greek year, and is part of the last quarter of the month.

* See previous note.

The Lord, the Messiah (may peace be with him!) manifested * in that night his birth of the holy, pure, and spotless Virgin Mary, daughter of Amran (so Mohammed styles the father of the blessed Virgin), of which God has made mention in his holy book, where he praises it in these terms: "Mary, the daughter of Amran, preserved her virginity intact; we breathed our spirit on her; she believed in the word of her Lord, gave credence to his books, and was obedient."

However, she is none other, in the Mohammedan Dome (period), than Amina, daughter of Wahab, mother of our lord Mohammed. Many of our co-religionists say that she is the same as Fatima (may peace be with her!); they base their assertion on the words which our lord Mohammed addressed to her once when she entered his presence: "Come in, O thou who art the mother of thine own father;" or, as others say, "Welcome, O thou who art the mother of thine own father." But the prophet only used this language to her to indicate that she was the mother of the three letters H, that is to say, Hasan, Hosein, and Mohsin.

As to the mother of our lord Mohammed, she was no other than Amina, daughter of Wahab, who, under the name of Mary, gave birth under the Christian Dome to the lord the Messiah, in the same way that lord Mohammed manifested his birth in his mother Amina, daughter of Wahab. The proof of what I advance is the recital which my lord and sheikh made to me. He said to me: "Having betaken myself to my lord, the virtuous Sheikh Abu-il-Hosein Mohammed, son of Ali Al Djalee, and having questioned him, among other things, about Mary, daughter of Amran, he replied to me that she was the same who, in the Mohammedan period, was called Amina, daughter of Wahab, mother of lord Mohammed,

* The word translated by M. Catafago "manifested," appears from a small portion of the Arabic text given by him to be the word Zahir, meaning that the manifestation and birth were merely in appearance.

(may peace be with him!)" He added that God had spoken of her, in his revealed book, in these terms: "Celebrated is Mary, in the book *par excellence;* celebrated is the day in which she separated herself from her family, on the side of the East: she took in secret a *veil* which belonged not to her parents, and we sent her our spirit under a human form. The compassionate one is my refuge, cried she, &c. &c."*

Our lord El Khaseebee has spoken on the subject of the holy virgin in his poem, which commences with these words:—

"The daughter of Amran, Mary, having presented her son to her family, God caused him to speak, although he was in his cradle. I am the servant of God, said the child to them; he will save me. I am his spirit, whom he has sanctified. It is he who has created me; if he will, he can make me live, or make me die."

Besides, God has said, in another passage of his holy book: "We presented Jesus and his mother to the admiration of the universe; we took them to a place of sojourning, where dwells peace and flows pure water."

Our lord El Khaseebee has spoken on the subject of the pure virgin in his poem which commences with these words: "In a dwelling where sojourns peace and flows pure water, Mary brought forth Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Redeemer, whom I love sincerely." The celestial degrees of Ahmed (the name by which Mohammed says he was mentioned in the gospels), for which I give my soul, are between the letter *h* and the letter *l*. The lord Christ (may peace be with him!) effected his birth through the Virgin, and spake miraculously, as has said our lord in his book: "He will make his word be heard by men, from the cradle to old age, and will be of the number of the Just."

Since, then, the lord Christ (may peace be with him!)

* See Koran, ch. iii.

spoke in this night, and manifested himself in it, it has been sanctified and honoured.

It is, then, the duty of the faithful to sanctify and honour this same night as it deserves, and to bless it by prayers addressed to God.

Prayer of the Eve of Christmas.

Thou shalt say: "O Lord my God, thou art the lofty and great One, the Sole, the only One, the eternal; thou hast neither been born, nor hast begotten, nor hast thou any equal. Thou hast manifested in this night thy Name, which is thy Soul, thy Veil, thy Throne, to all creatures as a child and under human form; whilst that, with thee, this same Name is the greatest and most sacred thing of all that is found in thy kingdom. Thou hast manifested it to men to prove thine eternity and thy divinity. Thou wilt manifest thyself to them in the person of thy demonstration, to recompense those who shall have recognised thy divinity at the epoch when thou calledst to thy religion, in sacrificing thyself for their redemption. Most blessed Lord, my God, who is so great as to be put in comparison with thee? Who is so wise as to attain to thy wisdom? Who is so merciful as to be so as much as thou art? Who is so generous as to attain to the same degree of generosity as thyself? Thou fillest all creatures with thy bounty. Thou callest to them by thy benevolence, thy periodic manifestations in the turnings (transmigrations) and revolutions. Thy mercy fills those who have been already the object of thine infinite goodness."

"I adjure thee, O Lord, my God, by thy most great Maana, by thy great Ism, and by thy honourable Bab, to increase in us thy favour; I adjure thee, O Lord, by the merits of this night, not to deprive our hearts of thy knowledge. After having placed us in thy right way, grant to us, O Lord, entire mercy, pardon, forgiveness, and in-

dulgence for our sins; make us hope to meet thee; grant us thy satisfaction, and give us what none other but thee can give.

"O Lord, our God, suffer us not to be deprived of thy favour, nor to be subjected to those who would lead us to adore another besides thee. O Prince of bees, great Ali, be our aid and refuge!" Here you will make a prostration, praying for thyself and thy brethren, that God will hear your wishes and prayers.

OF THE DAY OF NUROOZ.

THE feast of Nurooz is celebrated every year, for ever, on the 4th day of April. It is the first day of the Persian year, of the month called Afzooz dermah.* It is a very holy and solemn day, and of very great merit with God and our lords. May you rely on them!

I proceed, then, with the aid of God, to recount to you the great wonders which have been effected this day; which I hold in part by tradition from our lords, and have in part drawn from our books.

Know then (may God direct you in the path of his obedience!) that the kings of the line of Chosroes sanctified this day and recognised its excellence. They carried on this day crowns of myrtle and chrysanthemums, and celebrated the ceremony of sprinkling with water. For this reason the day has been called Nurooz. The kings of the line of Chosroes celebrated this festival in felicitations to one another, and in sending presents consisting of myrtle, chrysanthemums, and olive branches; they regarded this day as fruitful in great blessings.

The Lord (may he be glorified!) manifested himself in the person of the Persian kings, and it is in them that he effected the manifestations of his Names, his Doors, and

* I find no such name in Richardson's Persian and Arabic dictionary.

his sacred hierarchies, which compose the great world of light.

Our lord Al Khaseebee (may God sanctify his soul!) has explained to us this point in one of his epistles, and has rendered it clear to us in his treatise in the Seyakah.

[NOTE.—The Seyakah refers to Gabriel, Michael, &c., the bearers of the throne.]

After having disappeared, Adam manifested himself in the person of Enos; the Maana, which was then Seth, caused him to disappear, and manifested itself under his resemblance.

Adam having manifested himself in Alexander of the two horns, the Maana, which was then Daniel, caused him to disappear, and manifested itself under his resemblance.

Adam then manifested himself in the Persian period, in the person of Ardesheer son of Babek, the Persian, the first of the kings of the line of Chosroes [i.e. the Sassanides]; and the Maana, which was then under the form of "the two-horned,"* caused him to disappear, and manifested itself under his resemblance.

Adam having manifested himself in the person of Sapor son of Ardesheer, the Maana, which was then Ardesheer, caused him to disappear, and manifested itself under his resemblance.

Adam manifested himself next in the Arab periods, and, in the first place, in the person of Lavva [properly Luai] son of Kaleb; this last was called Lavva, he who turns aside, because he turned aside the lights from the Persians, to cause them to reign in Arabia, on account of the manifestation in that country of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab.

On quitting the Persians to manifest himself with the Arabs, the Divinity delegated to the first, the stations

* Alexander is called the two-horned, from his coins, in which he is represented with horns, as the son of Jupiter Ammon.

(Makâms) of his wisdom, to be transmitted successively to their kings, and designated, as personifications of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab, those called Sherween, Karween, and Chosroes; then other trinities, until Chosroes, Abraarim, and Anoorshirwan: but a change having taken place in this last, who gave himself up to pride, and disobeyed our lord Mohammed*, the Persians lost their royalty through their disobedience. However, their Makams continued to celebrate the Nurooz and the Mihrdjan; they carried on them chaplets of chrysanthemums, myrtle, and olive branches; they practised the ceremony of sprinkling, as well as all the other usages of the festival of Nurooz.

All the Persians observed these solemnities, since they had been instituted by the Makâms; as the Arab festivals are the institution of our lord Mohammed (may his peace be upon us!), who instituted in the Mohammedan period the three Arab festivals, namely, that of Fitr, that of Il Adha, and that of Gadeer. Thus was established the duty of celebrating always and for ever all these festivals; by the Persians as an annual solemnity consecrated by their kings in their periods, and by the Arabs as institutions prescribed in the Mohammedan period, in virtue of orders given to that effect by lord Mohammed. All these festivals, then, will be celebrated until the future manifestation of the Kaim [chief, i.e. the last imam], (may his peace be with you!).

Our lord Al Khasecbee (may God honour his Makâm!), in speaking of the merits of the Persians as personifications of the Bab, in another chapter of his treatise attributes to them wisdom, because the Maana and the Ism manifested themselves in them in the two Makâms of their first kings,

* It is curious to see the connexion and sympathy existing between all the secret heretical sects of the East. Anoorshirwan exterminated the socialist followers of Masdek, a Magian sect who had even gained over his father Kobad; and we see that for this he has a bad name with this Ansairee author.

namely, Ardesheer son of Babek, and Sapor his son; he adds, moreover, that the Persian kings have inherited wisdom, which was transmitted in them to the last trinity, namely, Sherween, Karween, and Chosroes. These three kings have the same degree of wisdom as the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab, of which they are the servants, since they recognise them.*

The Lord on quitting the Persians deposited his wisdom with them. He left them well content with them, and promised them to return. It is he himself who said with respect to this: "The Most High had deposited his mystery with you (the Arabs), and it was among you that he manifested his great works. He had destined you for receiving it, but you have lost it; while the Persians have preserved it, even after its disappearance, by the means of the *fire* and *light* in which he manifested himself."

The Lord said, in the history of Moses, that when he saw the burning bush he said to his family: "Stop, I perceive fire. Perhaps I shall bring you a piece of burning wood to warm you." When he had approached, a voice cried to him: "Moses, I am thy God; put off thy shoes, thou art in the holy valley of Torva." †

We read in the treatise of Fikh (instruction), "The Persians have sanctified *fire*, from which they await the manifestation of the Divinity;" and, in fact, the manifestation will take place among them, for they await this same manifestation, and the accomplishment of the promises of the Divinity in that element.

It is, then, for this reason that the Persians celebrate the Nurooz and the ceremony of chaplets.

* These words tend to explain the incongruity of the preceding with the general system of the Ansaireeh. These Persian kings are not true manifestations of the Maana, the Ism, and the Bab, but in some sense representations of them. I may add that I have had only the French translation by M. Catafago to follow; I should have much preferred to have had the original Arabic text.

† Koran.

Extract from the Chapter entitled "The Mystical Sense of the Nurooz, explained by the Imam Is-Sadik to Omar el Moufdel." *

When God created Adam he commanded the angels to adore him, and they did so. The same order being given to the devil (Iblees), he and his refused from pride to submit to it. The believers were then luminous bodies, inanimate. Iblees and his companions entered them, admiring their splendour, and were much astonished at their own obscurity, without however understanding the reason of the difference.

Then, after God had formed Adam after the model of these bodies, after he had caused him to be adored by the angels, and Iblees had disobeyed, saying that he was of a superior nature to these bodies, since he could enter into them without their being able to enter into him, God ordered the clouds to rain to punish Iblees; every drop which fell on one of the bodies animated it, since these drops were but souls; this rain being nothing else than the essence which dwells in all beings. To punish Iblees the more, God changed the disobedience of that rebel into fire, which should devour him and his. Iblees, seeing himself on the point of perishing, demanded as the only favour that God would put off his punishment to the day of the resurrection; but God granted him a less considerable period, and it was put off only to the day of the arrival of the Mohdi, who is to punish the infidels and merge all religions into one.

It is for this reason that this day has been called by God Noor (light). The Persians have called it Nurooz, a word derived from *noor* and *zi*, which signifies a see-saw†, alluding to the transmigration of souls.

* Properly Al Mufaddal ibn-Omar. M. Catafago makes the same mistake in this name as Dr. Wolff. El Mufaddal is mentioned as the eighth Door to the chain of imams.

† I have already given the true derivation of Nurooz, from which will appear the utter ignorance and presumption of this Ansairee "doctor."

As to water, which is sprinkled on this day, it is the symbol of the rain which animated the luminous bodies.

As to the fire which is lighted, and in which figures like dolls are burned, allusion is made to that which one day will devour Iblees and his companions.

Extract from the same Chapter.

Abu-il-Katib says that he who acknowledges the excellence of the day of Nurooz will never be subject to the transmigration of souls.

The Imam Djaafar-is-Sadik adds, after Al Moufdel [properly Mufaddal], that the Maana manifested itself in the time of the Persians twice each year, namely, at the times of the change from cold to heat, and of heat to cold.

The change from cold to heat was called Nurooz; and that from heat to cold Mihrdjan. These two days have been held sacred by the Persians as days of great solemnity, the more because the Maana then manifested itself in transmigrations among them. It was on these two days that he effected his manifestation by the chaplet and the fleece, and it was also for this reason that the Persians celebrated on these two days the ceremony of "eating and drinking." *

Let those who have understanding understand, adds Al Moufdel.

The day of Nurooz is celebrated every year, on the 4th of April, and that of Mihrdjan on the 16th of October.

I will now, for the sake of completeness, give what Niebuhr says of the Ansairee book which fell into his possession, because, though it may be easily procured, I wish to put together in this chapter all the most important documents that have been published with reference

* Il akl wa ish shirb. M. Catafago, Journ. Asiat. July 1848, gives "takdees il akl wa ish shirb," the consecration of the food and drink, as another expression for kuddâs, the mass.

to the Ansaireeh. This extract with the two preceding includes nearly everything trustworthy that has been written on the subject of their religion.

Niebuhr says* that the book had been probably found by Turkish officials in the room of an Ansairee, whom they had surprised in the night and taken to prison.

"It is the original book, but incomplete, and moreover badly written, and so full of obscure expressions that the author says himself in one place that the Ansaireehs had taken a wall from the country of Gog and Magog, i.e. that they made use in their books of obscure expressions to conceal their mysteries from the infidels. Thus no one that is not an Ansairee will ever understand what the author means when he speaks, for example, of Gabriel, the raven, ark, ring, *helkis*, the rod of Moses, the dromedary of Saleh, the cow of the Israelites, the concealed apostles. Similar expressions are met with in every page, without any explanation being found of them or of what they signify. However, I will here add the following remarks, which I have taken from the book†:—

"The Ansaireeh are called Mameveen (true believers). They speak of the unity of God, that is to say, of Ali, who is to come out of the eye of the sun and judge the world; and of five persons who are united to him. They are called 1. Maana; 2. Ism, he who possesses always the true wisdom, and whom Maana always guides; 3. Bab; 4. Itam (orphans); and 5. Hosein. I confess that, as I am not initiated in the mysteries of this religion, I understand nothing of this *Quintité*. I have not been able, any the more to understand what follows; however, I have been willing to give it here, because it appertains to the

* Travels, vol. iii. p. 358.

† It is not strange that Niebuhr should have found it difficult to understand the expressions used. He has but badly represented many of the names, but I have thought it best to give them just as they are printed in his "Travels," reminding the reader that they are to be read with a French pronunciation. Many of the j's, however, are German, and are to be read as y, the book of travels having been translated from German into French.

principal dogmas of the Ansaireeh. Whoever has no wish to read it can pass it over.

"God has appeared seven times in the world. The first time, i. Maana was Abel; ii. Ism, Adam; iii. Bab, Gabriel; iv. the Itam were also five persons, as 1. Michael (perhaps the archangel), 2. Israfil (perhaps the angel who, as say the Mohammedans, is to sound the trumpet at the last judgment), 3. Asrael (perhaps the angel of death), 4. Maleh (perhaps the doorkeeper of hell, according to the Mohammedans; 5. Riddnân (perhaps the doorkeeper of heaven); v. Hosein appeared the first time under the name Kaseh ibn-Mefluch. The enemies of the Divinity at the first incarnation were, 1. Kabib (Cain), 2. Anak (the sister of Cain), 3. Bahlu (vizier of Cain), 4. the Serpent, 5. the Peacock.*

"The second time, i. Maana was Seth; ii. Ism, Noah; iii. Bab, Jaël ibn-Fatîm; iv. the Itam were, 1. Aukil, 2. Effrakun, 3. Kinan, 4. Effrikakil, 5. Effrikan; v. Hosein appeared in the person of Hanseh. This time the enemies of the Divinity were, 1. Ham ibn-Noah, 2. Sheikh Hasa, 3. Jauk, 4. Jafut, 5. Nisser.

"The third time, i. Maana was Joseph; ii. Ism, Jacob; iii. Bab, Ham ibn-Kuseh; iv. the Itam were, 1. Jahud, 2. Haschur, 3. Malch, 4. Mamlek, 5. Aukil; v. Hosein appeared in the person of Mamhe ibn-Mansur. The enemies who opposed themselves this time to the Divinity were, 1. Chadsseldul, 2. Sima, 3. the King of India, 4. Habtâr, and 5. Naatel.

"The fourth time, i. Maana was Joshua; ii. Ism, Moses, iii. Bab, Dan ibn-Sabacht; iv. the orphans were, 1. Jahndan, 2. Haruk, 3. Abdulla, 4. Israel, 5. Omrân; v. Hosein Rubil ibn-Saleh. The adverse parties were, 1. Pharaoh, 2. Haman; 3. Karim.

"The fifth time, i. Maana was Asaph; ii. Ism, Solomon; iii. Bab, Abdullah ibn-Schamaan; iv. the orphans were,

* Emblem of the Yezidees.

1. Schaeira, 2. Schadla, 3. Harnaseh, 4. Maskul, 5. Asfir; v. Hosein appeared under the name Jantores Dekne. Then the adversaries of the Divinity were, 1. Nimrod, 2. Aad, 3. Samud.

"The sixth time, i. Maana, Shemmaan (Peter); ii. Ism, Jesus; iii. Bab, Rizoba ibn-Merzaban; iv. the Itam were then, 1. Jean fum essahab, 2. Jean Delami, 3. Paul, 4. Peter, 5. Matthew; v. Hosein was Aywsch ibn-Mankidsja. The adverse parties were, 1. Herod, 2. Jäbs, 3. Taus.

"The seventh time, Maana was Ali; ii. Ism, Mohammed el hambd; iii. Bab, Suleiman ibn-Buheire el Chiddre; iv. the Itam were, 1. Makdad ibn-el-Aswadel Kendi, 2. Abudur Jendab ibn-Junado el Gafari, 3. Abdulla ibn-Ruba el Masrari, 4. Othman ibn-Madun Madsejeschi, 5. Kambar ibn-Kaden Dusi; v. Hosein was called this time Hamdân. The enemies of the Divinity were, 1. Abu-Samuel, 2. Segdu, 3. Sendsjkuk.

"In another place the author says that an Ansairee must believe that Mohammed, Fatir (Fatimah), Hassan, Hosein, and Mohsin are but one Unity, and denote Ali. Besides that, a true believer must hold that there have always been 5 Itam; 12 Nukaba (chiefs of the family of Mohammed)*; 28 Nudjaba (or chosen ones); Machtassin (singular-ones); Machlassin (devout ones); Muntachabin (elect ones). He must likewise equally recognise the four Sittars, namely, 1. Sittar el Imam, or the chain of imams from Abel to Ali; 2. Sittar il imma, that is to say, the Patriarchs from the first Hassan to the last Hassan; 3. Sittar Rassala, or the chain of Apostles, as Edris, Noah, Hud, &c.; 4. Sittar Nibbna, the chain of poets, or respectable men, Annsch, Ishak, Jacob, &c.

"Our author calls Adam, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Mohammed, prophets; and Jaël, Hamedân, Abdulla, Salman, Abulchatil, Mohammed, Mufdil, and Abu-Schaib,

* Of Moses?

apostles. He calls a certain Ishak the greatest enemy of the Ansaireeh, because he had wished to kill Seiid Abu-Schaiib."

I have before given what Niebuhr quotes about transmigration and eating unclean things. He concludes:

"The author requires of the Ansaireeh that they discover nothing of their religion to strangers; to love their brethren; to be charitable; to abstain from theft; not to swear nor use any oaths: to suffer poverty patiently, and to bear ill-treatment on the part of their women."

I will add another document, being a translation from the first of the Masses given by M. Catafago in the German Oriental Society's Journal*, which is extracted from the Book of Festivals, of which portions have been given above. I give this piece because it is a type of Ansairee prayers, such as those found in my MS.; because it is nearly identical (as are the other two) with those given by M. Victor Langlois†; and lastly, because its opening gives an idea of the better parts of the Ansairee books. There is nothing useful or sensible in them but such like passages, which are rare.

MASS OF THE OINTMENT.‡

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The Mass of the Ointment. For every dear brother. O true believers! hear and obey! Consider this my Makam (station, place of religious assembly, with Ansaireeh), in which you are met together. Remove hatred, and envy, and malice from your hearts; so will your religion be perfect, and God will answer your prayer. For know

* Vol. ii. p. 388.

† Revue d'Orient, June, 1856; a notice which has been often referred to.

‡ Teeb, used by Ansaireeh of any good scent.

that God is present and found among you, hearing and seeing you, for he knows what is in the breast. Take care, believers, of laughing and boisterous mirth at the times of prayer with the Djahhal (initiated), for so will your good works be lowered, and your circumstances changed; for that is of the way of Iblees the accursed (may God most high curse him!) Hear what the imam says to you, for he is standing among you in obedience to the Most High (or he supports among you obedience to the Most High), the All-Knowing. This, the Mass of Ointment, after the formation of a good intention, is a prayer of truth, in which the Messiah specially used the letter *Seen* (S), until the time when every soul shall be given what it desired. He said in the blessed mass, Praised (*Subhân*) be he who made water life to everything*; praised (*Subhân*) be he who quickeneth the dead in Sarsar† by his power, the lofty one, the great! God is most great! I ask thee, O God, my Lord, by the truth of this Mass of Ointment, and by the truth of lord Mohammed, the beloved, in whose hand the rod became green; may he (God) cause blessing to descend in your dwellings, O possessors of this favour and of this ointment; and mayst thou sanctify the spirits of our brethren, the true believers, him who is far off, and him who is near of them, O my Lord, Prince of bees, O Ali, O great one!

* Koran, ch. xxi. v. 31.

† A cold destructive wind mentioned in the Koran.

THE END.

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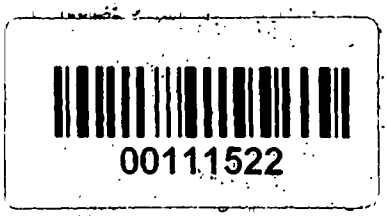
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